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Winter • 1949-50

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

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The New Criticism and the Democratic Tradition

Robert Gorham Davis

ALTHOUGH his influence has enjoyed a succession of revivals in France in the years since his death in 1821, Count Joseph de Maistre, author of *Du Pape* and *Soirées de Saint-Petersbourg*, is little known in this country. His works are not available in English, and when he is mentioned, it is usually simply as the supreme champion of clerical reaction. It was De Maistre who celebrated the headsman with his axe as the chief support of civilized society. Personally, De Maistre was an amiable and courageous man, and in his treatises on the developments of constitutions and of dogmas, he anticipated some of the most important ideas of Taine and of Cardinal Newman. But his experience of the French revolution made him a better enemy of all the "errors" he held responsible for it: not only Protestantism, rationalism and the Enlightenment, but the whole English philosophic and scientific tradition running through Bacon, Hobbes, Locke and Hume.

"To despise Locke is the beginning of wisdom," De Maistre wrote. He wished "*absolument tuer l'esprit du dix-huitième siècle*," and restore to France an even more absolutist and Papist regime than she had known during what he considered her best period, that of Louis XIV and the rather Gallican Bossuet. To the progressive,

ROBERT GORHAM DAVIS is an associate professor of English at Smith College and a frequent contributor to the critical reviews, especially to the New York *Times Book Review* and to *Partisan Review*. He is at present spending part of a sabbatical year in Taos, New Mexico.

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perfectionist illusions of Rousseau and Condorcet, De Maistre opposed the dogma of original sin, "*le péché originel, qui explique tout, et sans lequel on n'explique rien.*" For De Maistre, the manifestations and punishment of original sin made the pattern of human history.

It is hard to imagine anyone more remote from the America of Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman than this somberly reactionary envoy from Sardinia to the court of Alexander I. We have, it is true, a party opposed to the Democrats, but when the Republicans speak, it is not in the name of reaction, the Church, *l'ancien régime*, but of a sounder liberalism, a greater individual freedom. The place to find the values and views of De Maistre, during these sixteen years of liberal-democratic presidencies, has been the critical quarterlies. The vocabulary of some of our academically most influential critics—critics who have taught and edited textbooks and written good poetry as well as criticism, and who knew each other at Vanderbilt or Louisiana State—has been the vocabulary not of Locke or Mill or Emerson or Whitman, but of the author of *Du Pape*.

Over the last two decades, in the journals of the New Criticism, *authority, hierarchy, catholicism, aristocracy, tradition, absolutes, dogma, truths* became related terms of honor, and *liberalism, naturalism, scientism, individualism, equalitarianism, progress, protestantism, pragmatism* and *personality* became related terms of rejection and contempt. As programmatic social movements, the New Humanism and Agrarianism seemed short-lived. They elected no senators or representatives, and had no influence on the popular culture of the mass media. These latter became, indeed, as a result of the war and the later rivalry with Russia, much more active propagandizers for democratic freedoms and minority rights. And during the thirties, the humanist-agrarian philosophy lost out in most of the colleges to the Marxian social-consciousness which became fashionable in that period. But during the forties, with the intense reaction against Stalinism, the socio-historical patterns of acceptance and rejection established by the humanist-agrarian movement quietly triumphed on the higher literary levels, and became the required postulates, curiously enough, for the proper evaluation of literature as literature. In an article in the *Sewanee Review* in the winter of 1946-47, Robert Heilman contended that holding

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liberal-democratic-progressive views with any conviction made one incapable of appreciating imaginative literature at all.

The development of this complex of ideas is well-documented through the thirties, and easily studied. It is found in the New Humanist symposia at the beginning of the decade, in the Agrarian manifestoes, "I'll Take My Stand," and "Who Owns America?"; in the "reactionary" criticism of Allen Tate and Yvor Winters; "God without Thunder" by John Crowe Ransom; in the files of the Southern quarterlies, of Eliot's *New Criterion*, and especially of Seward Collins' Catholic-distributivist *American Review*—for which G. R. Elliott, Donald Davidson, Norman Foerster, Yvor Winters, Cleanth Brooks, Allen Tate, Mark Van Doren and Austin Warren continued to write, even after it became openly pro-Franco and pro-fascist. In the forties, their pattern of attack was strengthened by the very explicit criticism of scientific, progressive and liberal attitudes in the Catholic novels of Graham Greene and Evelyn Waugh, and in the Anglican-orthodox thrillers of C. S. Lewis. Lionel Trilling made the inadequacy of the liberal imagination the central theme of his influential study of E. M. Forster. W. H. Auden, in *For the Time Being*, imagined Herod a fussy, futile, murderous, self-bemused Liberal, trying to oppose his ideas of reason and progress to the fact of the Incarnation. Protestant neo-orthodoxy, as vigorously preached by Reinhold Niebuhr, joined with T. S. Eliot in *The Idea of a Christian Society*, and with anti-Stalinists who still retained their Marxian frame of reference, in identifying liberalism with an "age of free exploitation which has passed."

This general intellectual assault on the assumptions of democratic liberalism at a time when the United States is contending with Russia for world leadership in the name of democratic liberalism has caused a spiritual expatriation in the approach to literature which goes much deeper than the physical expatriation of the twenties. And it represents a much greater alienation than the Marxist criticism of the thirties, which professed itself the heir of the democratic tradition. It caused the contradictions and uncertainties which appeared in the most responsible comments defending the award of the Bollingen prize to Ezra Pound. What was brought into question here was not so much the matter of recognizing as a good poet a man with

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reprehensible social views. What was brought into question was a complex of ideas which made poetic sensibility, purity of language, and the integrity of art inextricably involved with ideas of authority, aristocracy and reaction, and at odds with the ethos of a liberal democracy. The character of this complex may be seen more clearly if we put beside Pound a man who was convicted in a French court at Lyons shortly before Pound was imprisoned at Pisa, a man who was also an admirer of Mussolini and a great hater of Jews, the academician and poet of *Musique Intérieure*, Charles Maurras.

Pound, a Protestant from Indiana, is still a pretty unorthodox American individualist. Maurras represents the union of classicism, clericalism and reaction, in a much purer form. And Maurras, through Pound's friend T. E. Hulme, and through T. S. Eliot, had a much more direct and explicit responsibility than Pound for many of the ideas that pervade American criticism today. This combination of ideas is not peculiar to this country or this century. The basic premises go back to De Maistre, whom Maurras called "*le type et le chef*" of the "*maîtres de la contre-revolution.*" A critical revaluation of cultural history back to the thirteenth century is required, with a series of rejections which include a good deal of the Reformation and the Renaissance, and even the criticism of Scholasticism by the English rationalist-anti-traditionalists, Duns Scotus and Occam. An extreme rendering of this thesis may be found in the essay, "The Southern Quality," by the Canadian, Herbert Marshall McLuhan, in *A Southern Vanguard* (1947).

The central question is of the nature of man, and from its answer the religious, literary and political conclusions follow. Here orthodoxy finds itself contending with two persistent heresies, the Pelagian and the Calvinist. The first results in the faith of the Savoyard vicar, Romanticism, Deweyanism and democratic progressivism. The second results in scientific determinism, the naturalist novel, the ethos of capitalist self-interest, and the Hobbesian-Stalinist state. McLuhan, for instance, finds both heresies characteristic of a rationalist-individualist New England mind in rebellion against the patristic established church of the Stuarts. He opposes the Calvinist Edwards and the Pelagian Emerson to the organic traditionalism of the South. "The *essential* impatience and rebellion of the New England mind

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disqualifies it for political and artistic functions, so that the defection of Henry James and T. S. Eliot was a trauma necessary to the preservation of their talents." Both De Maistre and Maurras explain Rousseau by his origin in the Geneva of Calvin, and with Robespierre's dictatorship the circle is made complete.

The orthodox view of human nature as essential postulate for literary criticism was introduced into recent Anglo-American literary controversy by Irving Babbitt and T. E. Hulme. Both explicitly acknowledged the French sources of their ideas. All the most important doctrines of *Rousseau and Romanticism* and *Democracy and Leadership* are to be found in the quotations from reactionary French writers in *Masters of Modern French Criticism,* a book which shows how thoroughly most of the questions which have agitated American criticism in the last two decades had already been fought out in the French nineteenth century. Hulme's influential essay, "Romanticism and Classicism" firmly links classicism, the Church and the dogma of original sin. Hulme denies the truth of the Rousseauist-progressive faith in man as an "infinite reservoir of possibilities," as against the classical view of man as "an extraordinarily fixed and limited animal whose nature is absolutely constant. It is only by tradition and organization that anything decent can be got out of him." Those for whom this distinction is most vital, Hulme wrote, are "Maurras, Lasserre and all the group connected with *Action française*." Hulme's essay had been written in 1913 and Babbitt's *Masters* published in 1912, the period dramatized in Martin du Gard's *Jean Barois,* when French intellectual youth was turning against the Republican régimes brought into power by the Dreyfus victory. Under the leadership of the *Camelots du Roi* they beat up Jewish and liberal professors in the Sorbonne and fought for the cult of Joan of Arc. Among them "republican" was the same sort of pejorative that "liberalism" has become in our own reviews.

Critic of Rousseauist progressivism and scientific naturalism though he was, Babbitt retained his New England individualism and an affection for Emerson. He preached an abstract higher will, rather than orthodox tradition and the church. And Hulme was attracted by thinkers like Bergson and Sorel. Though Hulme's theory of dis-

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continuity and Babbitt's "law for thing and law for man," both helped to preserve the distinctions among religion, art, science, society and history which scientific naturalism and romanticism were accused of destroying, T. S. Eliot and those who followed him identified themselves much more positively with the dogmatic and clerical elements in the tradition to which Hulme and Babbitt introduced them.

Eliot's lectures at the University of Virginia in the first year of the New Deal, published as *After Strange Gods: A Primer of Modern Heresy*, make the most useful text. They are not outdated, for the same principles are found in *The Idea of a Christian Society* and *Notes toward the Definition of Culture*. In the earlier lectures, addressed to a society "worm-eaten with Liberalism," Eliot expressed his sympathy with the new Agrarians of a South which, as compared to New England, was further from New York, "less industrialised and less invaded by foreign races." Of his general literary-religious thesis Eliot said, "I doubt whether what I am saying can convey very much to anyone for whom the doctrine of Original Sin is not a very real and tremendous thing," and of the evangelical heresies but sound anti-democratic insights of D. H. Lawrence: "That we can and ought to reconcile ourselves to Liberalism, Progress and Modern Civilisation is a proposition which we need not have waited for Lawrence to condemn." We need not have waited, for in the same words, in reference to the Pope, this had been the final proposition anathematized in the *Syllabus of Errors* of 1864.

This *Syllabus*, attached to the *Quanta Cura* of Pius IX, condemned Liberalism in precisely the terms made familiar by our contemporary reviews. A compilation of eighty modern "errors" attacked in papal documents of the period immediately preceding, it had its inception in the year 1849, as did the preparation of the Bull, *Ineffabilis Deus*, which re-emphasized the dogma of Original Sin. Both resulted from Pope Pius' extreme reaction against liberalism after the events of '48, and both prepared for the definition of papal infallibility, the doctrine so strongly advocated in De Maistre's *Du Pape*. The papal decrees of Pius IX, Professor Soltan says, represent "the political philosophy of De Maistre as re-edited by Louis Veuillot."

In the year 1851, also reacting to the revolutions of '48, the critic

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St. Beuve wrote a very favorable piece on De Maistre, admitting that recent events had justified a good many of his theories. And in the same year, also reacting against his brief Republican enthusiasm of '48, Charles Baudelaire discovered a significant relationship between De Maistre and Edgar Allan Poe. "*De Maistre et Edgar Poe m'ont appris à raisonner*," he wrote. In his two prefaces to his translations of Poe, Baudelaire opposed Original Sin to progress, and aristocracy to democracy, in the manner now so familiar to us. He made Poe the martyr of Northern commercialism, "*quelle odeur de magasin, comme disait J. de Maistre à propos Locke.*" Andrew Lang, in *Letters to Dead Authors*, speaks of "your translator, M. Charles Baudelaire, who so strenuously shared your views about Mr. Emerson and the Transcendentalists, and who so energetically resisted all those ideas of 'progress' which 'came from Hell or Boston.'" Baudelaire found most pertinent the passage from *Colloquy of Monas and Una* which ends: "He grew infected with system and with abstraction. He enwrapped himself in generalities. Among other odd ideas, that of universal equality gained ground; and in the face of analogy and of God—in despite of the loud warning voice of the laws of *gradation* so visibly pervading all things in Earth and Heaven—wild attempts at an omni-prevalent Democracy were made."

It is this passage which Charles Maurras used as the epigraph for *Trois idées politiques*, the first book to come out of the movement, *Action française*. "*Cette idée de hierarchie, salutaire et nourricière a été reprise longtemps plus tard, par les Italiens du fascisme—Gerarchia—selon les purs échos de Baudelaire et de Poe. . . . L'aristocrate virginien proclame la contradiction radicale et complète entre* toute *démocratie et les archétypes supérieurs auxquels le monde doit sa vie, sa durée, son progrès, sa beauté.*"

Maurras, born in Provence in 1868, was himself a Southern regionalist, interested in Provençal poetry, and expecting a Southern renaissance that would restore the national character. His federalism, like the states rights program of our own South, was intended to preserve provincial cultures from destruction by a powerful, commercial North which had been their enemy ever since the Albigensian crusades. Maurras' review of Barres' *Les Déracinés* developed

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into a book on decentralization. Maurras was converted to classicism by a visit to Greece, and to anti-Semitism by Drumont's *La France Juive*. The Dreyfus affair turned him into a militant clerical nationalist, who opposed the rationalism, romanticism and Protestantism of Germany and England to the traditional, classical Latin Catholicism of France and Italy. Maurras' favorite period was that of Louis XIV, Bossuet and Racine, just as Eliot's was that of the Stuarts, Andrewes and Donne. It was not only from De Maistre, whom he frequently cites, that Maurras got his idea of a traditional order based on the family, the region, the monarch and the church, but also from Comte, Renan and Taine, who were, respectively, a positivist, a sceptic and a determinist.

Comte had urged the alliance of Catholics and Positivists against the disintegrative spirit of Protestantism. In thirty years of philosophical writing, he had always represented "*la souveraineté du peuple comme une mystification oppressive, et l'égalité comme un ignoble mensonge.*" Renan and Taine both reacted strongly after the Commune and the defeat of '71 in the direction of tradition, discipline and monarchy. In "*Les Origines de la France contemporaine*," Taine attacked the Rousseauist alienation of the individual, with all his rights, from the community, and the Jacobin attempt to force real men and real communities into their abstract molds. "Nothing," Taine wrote, "is more dangerous than a general idea in narrow and empty heads." The error of '89, Maurras said in his "*Enquête sur la Monarchie*," was perpetuated in the nineteenth century only by "purely sentimental and romantic geniuses, Hugo, Lamartine, Michelet, Sand and Quinet, while the stronger minds, not only Bonald and De Maistre, but also Balzac, Le Play, Taine and Renan emphatically repudiated this error." "*Leurs doctrines puissantes et précises ont lentement et profondement penetré dans l'âme et dans le coeur des jeunes generations intelligentes.*"

This emphasis on the superior precision and truth of traditional orthodoxy, quite apart from the matter of faith, is now a familiar theme in American criticism, which opposes it to the abstractions of liberalism and to the devaluative and depersonalizing effects of secular science. For Eliot, the Church is the great repository of wisdom, and in the essay on Pascal he describes the logical steps by

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which one finds oneself inexorably committed to the dogma of the Incarnation. "The organized meaning of the encounters of man and nature, which are temporal and concrete, is religious tradition," Allen Tate wrote, "and its defence is dogma." According to the theories of the New Criticism, a poem is comparable to traditional orthodoxy in providing the most responsible and complete version of our experience. If it avoids a list of heresies parallel to those of theology, poetry becomes a form of knowledge superior to that of science. And, like the dogmas of orthodoxy, poetry is not conditioned, but absolute. To this sense of poetry, which he held, Maurras, like John Crowe Ransom, applied the term "ontological." "*Ontologie serait peut-etre le vrai nom, car la Poésie porte surtout vers les racines de la connaissance de l'Être.*"

The indebtedness of the New Critics to Maurras, through Eliot, is a direct one. Maurras was an atheist, but he supported the Church, not only as the essential basis of a classical and aristocratic society, but also as, in its dogmas, coming close to the truths of human nature. This was consistent with a French reactionary clericalism from De Maistre to Brunetière, which valued the Church primarily for the way in which it shaped and organized an anti-democratic culture of hierarchy, authority and tradition. It was this attitude which permitted Eliot to contrast the orthodoxy of the unbeliever Joyce with the heresies of Yeats and Lawrence who, though strongly anti-democratic and anti-rationalist, were misled by their Protestant individualism into magic and primitivism rather than into the Church. When *Action française* was finally condemned by the Pope, and Maurras accused of leading young men away from faith, Eliot came to his defense in two pieces in the *Criterion,* and said, "I have been a reader of the work of Maurras for eighteen years; upon me he has had exactly the opposite effect." Later, in a group review of books on fascism, Eliot wrote, "Most of the concepts which might have attracted me in fascism I seem already to have found, in a more digestible form, in the work of Charles Maurras." In his essay on Babbitt, Eliot said that if Babbitt could only come to accept the Church, "his influence might join with that of another philosopher of the same rank—Charles Maurras—and might, indeed, correct some of the extravagances of that writer." Under the influence of Jacques Maritain,

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however, who had been an earlier supporter of *Action française*, but who accepted the Papal condemnation, Eliot came to realize the spiritual dangers of what was basically a pragmatic support of the Church, even in the interests of culture and of a traditional, aristocratic order.

Eliot's church is the Established Church of England, but in this country there is no established church, and the founding fathers were determined that there should not be. Though Ransom, Tate, Brooks and Warren, following Eliot's emphasis, have all discussed religion in relation to literature and the South, they have had as much difficulty in finding a native orthodoxy as in finding acceptable political and literary American ancestors. All John Crowe Ransom could suggest at the end of "God without Thunder" was, "With whatever religious institution a modern man may be connected, let him try to turn it back towards orthodoxy." But obviously neither the rationalist, Protestant neo-orthodoxy of Reinhold Niebuhr nor the Romanism of the American Catholic Church are really compatible with the complex of ideas which underlies the New Criticism.

The truth is that there is no such relation between orthodox religion in the United States and conservative or reactionary politics as that we associate with the name of Burke in England or De Maistre in France. And despite the Civil War, there are not two Americas like the two Frances, red and black, consistently opposed in religion, politics and ideas, the two Frances which Renan compared to the twins fighting in the womb of Rebecca. The French pattern cannot be made to fit ours. The Southern founding fathers were sons of Locke and the Enlightenment, and the greatest works of the moral imagination, in Hawthorne, Melville and James, have come from the commercial and Calvinist North. But even in France, where the reactionary movement has been so pragmatic and romantic in nature, it has had a very dubious social base. France has no king, and the aristocracy lost its regional independence and responsibility long before its terrible abuse of privilege brought on the violence of the revolution. The Catholic Church of Montalembert and Leo XIII, recognizing that France's future lay with republicanism, did come to terms with it. Maurras' dream was finally realized, under Marshall Pétain, only by surrendering France to the Germany Maurras hated.

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In 1939 and 1940, Maurras used his still very considerable prestige in reactionary and military circles to help bring about this betrayal.

Nothing is more fantastic than the application of the ideas of De Maistre and Maurras to America, even though they are linked by dubious and derivative logic to a very impressive body of poetry and criticism. The neo-traditionalists are guilty of exactly the error of which they accuse the ideologues of the Enlightenment, the attempt to impose ideas which have no roots or source in the traditional way of life. There is a distinctively American character which, as foreign visitors report it, has remained remarkably stable in the last hundred and fifty years, and which has been deepened and complicated, but not changed, by the "influx of foreigners" which it has successfully assimilated. This character has been developed by a way of life, a received tradition, which has increasingly realized the ideas of those philosophers most under attack at the present time for their rationalist abstractions. This tradition, too, represents preserved experience, including experience with established churches, privileged orders, absolutism and dogma going back to the thirteenth century. Every circumstance in this country has tended to the strengthening of this tradition, and no social basis exists for a rival tradition of serious cultural significance. That there are deficiencies in the prevailing culture, in the character of its customs, its imaginative symbols, its commercialized mass media and its image of the ethical self, the New Criticism has helped to make emphatically clear. But, on the other hand, the debate in *Partisan Review* last spring over "liberalism," and the debate over the Pound award in the *Saturday Review* last summer, showed the alienating and paradoxical results of the pattern of social rejection underlying the New Criticism. They increased the sense that the New Criticism, even in a purely literary way, has completed its corrective purpose. What these debates prepared us for, as we enter the literary fifties, is a new assumption of cultural responsibility by the intelligentsia but within the terms of the democratic society, and a new restorative effort that finds its materials within the imaginative and historical resources of the democratic tradition itself.

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Incantation

Hillel Frimet

Boruch, Boruch, my father! Let us go together
as we used to go when I cried—Take me with you!
Adonoi! Adonoi! how could I know to praise you then
with my heart so little, my touch weak? I could
only raise my eyes to your higher ones, and beg.
I am your son, and you are my father, my higher
eyes, my stronger touch, my saltier tears. Raise me
to your face so I taste them. Raise me!
Let me feel them down your sad cheeks,
let me take them from your lips
and put them on my tongue.
Do they taste like radish-root, father?

You opened the doors wide, remember? With a glass of wine
in your hand. Why is this day different
from all other days, father? Why is the root bitter?

✪ The work of HILLEL FRIMET has appeared in several magazines, and a volume of his prose and poetry, *Fragments*, is being published this fall. Mr. Frimet is now in Europe where he is studying and writing.

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Brains and Calculating Machines

John E. Pfeiffer

PERHAPS the largest number with any physical meaning is $10^{2,783,000}$—one followed by 2,783,000 zeros. It was computed more than twenty years ago by a neurologist, and represents the number of pathways among the nerve cells or neurons in a brain containing a million such units connected in pairs. But the number falls far short of indicating the actual complexity of man's nervous system. The number of neuron-to-neuron connections is much greater in the human brain, which contains ten billion nerve cells instead of only a million.

All that we do or think is embodied in these connections. Any given reflex or often repeated form of behavior involves the use of definite pathways which conduct nervous signals from our inputs or sense organs upward to the brain, and descend to the muscles so that we move according to the messages they transmit. The brains of animals are geared very closely to the demands of the environment. They are concerned entirely with maintaining balance and generally adjusting the organism to its "natural" needs. Only the human brain is sufficiently complex to be in a constant state of maladjustment, creating new needs and inventing problems too difficult for it to solve by itself.

To assist our brains, we have developed computing devices—desk-type adding machines, differential analyzers, punch-card sorters and classifiers, and many specialized business machines. But these are not enough. Facts, usually in the form of numbers, are piling up far too rapidly for the computers we have now. Numbers are accumulating in thousands of consumer surveys and public-opinion polls, in the 20,000,000 cubic feet of space required to hold government records and statistics, and in more than 1,000,000 scientific papers published annually throughout the world.

✪ Formerly science and medicine editor of *Newsweek* and science director of the Columbia Broadcasting System, JOHN PFEIFFER is at present a member of the editorial board of *Scientific American*.

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Answers are buried in this mass of information, if we could only perform the necessary calculations. For example, there are mathematical equations for computing highly accurate weather forecasts a week or a month in advance (the present limit is three or four days, at best). Furthermore, local stations send 600,000 numbers a day to the Weather Bureau in Washington, representing facts about temperatures, wind directions and velocities, and barometric pressures. Using these equations, these numbers—and the best conventional calculating machines available—it would take more than a year to "predict" next week's weather.

But new computers, already built or under development, will be able to prepare the same forecasts within a day. They will also solve similarly complex problems in atomic energy, aircraft design, census analysis, insurance, economics and many other fields. These calculating machines have been called "mechanical brains," a term that was dreamed up long before it had any particular meaning. It was a journalistic cliché more than twenty-five years ago, when the most advanced computers were ensembles of gears, rotating shafts and other moving parts whose fundamental structure bore little resemblance to the brain. The term stuck mainly because it made good headlines.

But the brain-computer analogy makes more sense today. In applying electronics instead of mechanics to the design of mathematical machines, scientists have unconsciously—and sometimes consciously—imitated various structural characteristics of the nervous system. As a result, they are now outdoing the journalists when it comes to making imaginative comparisons, so that it is often difficult to tell whether they speak of brains or machines. One mathematician is convinced that any mental function can be duplicated with electronic devices. But even if future research should happen to reveal that the human brain possesses abilities beyond the limits of computers, there is still plenty of glory for the machine-builders.

Computing machines resemble brains most obviously in that they do arithmetic. The war produced the first of the new breed of all-electronic machines, the Eniac (electronic numerical integrator and computer). It adds, subtracts, multiplies and performs other simple operations, counting off numbers essentially like the Chinese abacus

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or an adding machine. The difference is that it has thousands of vacuum tubes, the sort used in ordinary radio sets, to do the counting—and a tube works many times faster than a bead on a wire or a gear. Its invisible "moving parts" are electrons whose inertia, or resistance to stopping and starting, is extremely low. It can serve as a gap in an electrical circuit, no electrons passing through it. But a flow of current can be triggered by suitable electrical pulses, and the tube fires and closes the circuit in a millionth of a second. The firing of a tube is a count.

As we shall see, the nervous system performs extremely complicated calculations at relatively high speeds. But these operations are highly specialized, and the brain is not well designed to handle the arithmetical steps involved in many scientific problems. Assisted by paper and pencil, it takes about ten minutes to multiply two ten-digit numbers correctly; with an adding machine, the time is reduced to ten seconds. But Eniac performs about 330 multiplications in a single second, while more advanced machines will handle more than 10,000 such operations in the same time. Compared with the desk calculator, this represents a 100,000-fold increase in speed, which is the difference between a week and a millennium.

Eniac uses the digits 0 to 9 in performing its computations. But the familiar decimal system—which is based on the fact that we were designed with ten fingers—was invented ages before the development of electronics and is not the most logical system for vacuum tubes. Tubes in computing machines are "two-fingered" devices. They are relays or switches, and may be in either of two positions, "on" or "off." They count most efficiently in the binary system, which represents all numbers by only two digits, 0 and 1. The decimal number 23 is shorthand for the statement that there are two tens and three ones. The same number in the binary system, which works on powers of two instead of ten, is 10111 (one sixteen, no eights, one four, one two, and one one); in binary notation 1, 2, 3 and 4 are 1, 10, 11 and 100 respectively. Most of the new electronic computers use this number system.

To communicate with the machines, mathematicians prepare lists of numbers and detailed instructions which specify how the numbers are to be used and in what order. This information is translated into

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special codes, patterns of holes in punch-cards, or magnetized spots on reels of wire or tape such as those used in sound recorders. Electrical reading devices scan the coded messages, storing them in memory organs. Once its memory has been filled, a computer is ready to start at the throwing of a switch, and it will perform all the calculations necessary to solve a problem without any further human intervention.

One of the most widely used memory devices is the so-called acoustic tank or mercury delay line, a tube shaped something like a fluorescent lamp and filled with liquid mercury. Pulses of low-voltage current patterned after various instructions and numbers enter one end of the tube and are fed into a crystal—the transmitter —which expands and contracts rapidly when electrically stimulated. The oscillations set up waves or "ripples" in the enclosed mercury column, which travel to the other end of the tube, strike another crystal—the receiver—and cause it to work in reverse by producing electrical pulses that are exact duplicates of the original signal. The pulses are then wired back to the first transmitting crystal, and the cycle may continue indefinitely, preserving the original patterns of the electrical codes. This type of circulating memory stores considerable information; a single tube a foot and a half long carries the equivalent of about 33 ten-digit numbers, any one of which can be "recalled" by the machine in a fraction of a second.

For each problem, a machine receives a unique set of numbers, but the instructions may be the same for large groups of related problems. These can be used repeatedly, giving the machine an "external" memory as contrasted to the built-in type of mercury memory. Instructions that can be applied to many problems may be stored for future reference in a library of magnetic tape or wire. Modern electronic computers also make judgments of a kind. They can be instructed to follow one of two alternative mathematical sequences, depending on whether a number calculated at a particular stage of the problem is greater or less than a certain pre-assigned value. In some cases, they will even modify their own instructions, a feature that suggests learning by experience.

Do calculating machines actually "think"? A good deal of nonsense and pseudo-philosophy has been written and spoken about this

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inevitable question by people who understand either computers or brains, but not both, and by scientific dilettantes. Existing machines can do arithmetic and follow the rules of the logical system whose premises have been wired into their electronic circuits. Theoretically, they can be designed to do anything that can be expressed precisely in words, because words may be put into clear-cut, simple codes. But much of what we know, perhaps most of it, is unexpressed. We act and react to gestures and unnamed nuances; we react emotionally to such things as symphonies and fellow human beings, usually in ways we do not understand. All these and many other elements go into thinking.

As Claude Shannon of the Bell Telephone Laboratories has emphasized, the problem of whether or not machines are capable of "thinking" is a matter of definition—and we are not yet wise enough to define the term precisely. Speaking loosely, computers cannot frame hypotheses or tell us how to make the apparatus for checking them. They solve the problems we invent. If thinking is restricted to the shaping of new ideas or devices, the machines cannot be credited with intellectual powers. But in completely ruling out the machines, we also rule out a good many human activities which pass for thinking. We have excluded memorizing multiplication tables and other rules of arithmetic, looking up data in file cabinets (the material could just as well be coded on a magnetic tape), or wading throught masses of business statistics. If we broaden the notion of thinking to include these and similar accomplishments, we are forced to concede that machines think in a very real sense of the word.

However we resolve the dilemma, the time will certainly come when electronic computers will be manufactured by the hundreds or thousands. The result will be a new phase of the industrial revolution, the replacement of an appreciable proportion of white-collar workers by machines that do the work of brains as efficiently as cranes and derricks do the work of muscles. Perhaps by then we will have been educating people to ask as well as answer questions. The term "mechanical brain" has clearly become more than the empty figure of speech it once was.

But the analogy is also being worked the other way around. Calculating machines resemble brains—and, according to Norbert

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Wiener of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and others—brains resemble calculating machines. The surface of the cerebral hemispheres is covered by a thin grey sheet of billions of neurons that folds down into, and up out of, the convolutions of the underlying white matter. This is the "bark" or cortex, the most highly developed part of man's nervous system. Each neuron is a cell designed to make electricity, and to receive and transmit electrical impulses. It consists of a cell body which has two kinds of outbranching fibers: dendrites, that pick up impulses from other nerve cells, and axons, that pass the signals further along the neuronal chain.

To a first approximation, a neuron can be considered as a self-repairing vacuum tube. It is what engineers call a go-no go device, in that it is always either off or on. When it receives an electrical signal, it either "fires" to transmit an impulse, or else is completely inactive. Some of the principles that govern the operation and design of the electronic circuits in computing machines provide insight into the workings of the natural neuronal circuits. The brain's instructions and numbers come in from the outside world through the eyes and other sense organs. The sensations are then transformed into electrical pulses, and given identifying numbers so that the brain can use them.

Thus, the softest sound you can hear produces about ten pulses per second in the auditory nerve, while very loud sounds may send 300 to 400 pulses a second. Intermediate values represent intermediate intensities. All sensations and all qualities of sensations—pitch, brightness, degree of pain, intensity of odor—are similarly translated into numbers. The neurons in the brain compute on the basis of these numbers and, like the vacuum tubes to which they have been compared, compute in the binary rather than the decimal system. The answers are used to shape our actions and ideas.

Dr. Warren S. McCulloch of the University of Illinois Medical School and Walter Pitts of M.I.T. have studied several of the brain's computer-like processes. When you go from a dark to a brilliantly lighted room, the pupils of your eyes immediately contract, reducing their diameters by an amount corresponding to the amount of extra illumination. But the very existence of such reflexes implies computing circuits in the nervous system. The pupillary reflex im-

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plies that the brain can measure the amount of light, has a standard of desirable illumination, and "knows" just how many thousandths of an inch each pupil has to contract or dilate for every change in the environment.

The visual apparatus of the brain has other "automatic volume controls." If you want to examine an object in close detail, the brain centers the image on a particular part of the retina—the fovea, a small yellowish area specialized for sharp visual discrimination. To control this reflex, the brain must contain a circuit that can distinguish the foveal position from all other positions on the retina. The circuit has been found at the back of the midbrain, where the positions of the retina are mapped, using a kind of graph or coordinate system such as the network of intersecting streets and avenues which locates city addresses.

The midbrain has a network to provide every position on the retina with two numbers that identify it as definitely as 30 West 73rd Street places an apartment house in New York City. The foveal position has its unique "address," also indicated by two numbers, and the brain computes the difference between each of these numbers and the two numbers that identify the image's present position. Coded electrical impulses representing these differences are relayed to the muscles of the eyes, which move the eyes until the differences are reduced to zero—in other words, until the image is centered on the fovea. This process involves the use of what is known as double integration in mathematics. Fortunately, it is performed unconsciously and at high speeds, because we would be hopelessly paralyzed if we had to think out the computations responsible for our reflexes.

The neuronal circuits which make reasoning possible are far more subtle than those which compute our reflexes, but a relatively simple example will indicate how some neurophysiologists are approaching the study of mind. How do we recognize shapes independent of their size or relative distance from us? Stated in such simple terms, the problem may not seem particularly important, but it bears directly on the nature and mechanism of mathematical reasoning and all other forms of abstract thought. For when we see two shapes, one small and at a great distance and the other large and near-by, and recognize

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both as squares, we are ridding the forms of their differences and extracting similarities or ideas from them.

During the war Dr. McCulloch was working on a photoelectric device to enable the blind to "read" printed material by ear. The device was intended to scan the letters of the alphabet and translate each into a characteristic sound, various sound patterns serving as audible versions of words. The difficulty was to design an electronic circuit that could recognize, and give the same signal for, a particular letter—whether it was upper or lower case, and independent of the size of type used. A provisional circuit was sketched as a diagram showing the arrangement of the vacuum tubes and the wires connecting the tubes.

One brain investigator happened to see the diagram, and remarked that it closely resembled the pattern of nerve fibers and cells in a part of the cortex concerned with vision. The remark led to a comparative study of the electronics of the circuit and the anatomy of the visual cortex. As a result, we now have a theory of how the brain performs the abstraction of recognizing a shape—say, a square—whatever its size. The visual cortex is built up of many layers of neurons, and what may happen is that the image of a square trips elaborate circuits which, in effect, magnify and reduce the image on successive layers, rapidly producing a series of standard sizes. If each magnified or reduced size were identified by a number, and the numbers were added—and if the image of every square tripped the same circuits—the final sum would be the same, whatever the size of the original square seen. This sum, known as an invariant, would be translated into electrical signals that "stand for" the shape.

Such processes are of the essence of thinking. Brains, like calculating machines, compute to solve their problems, and there are other interesting resemblances. One form of human memory consists of neurons arranged in loops in which signals circulate and are preserved for various periods without being "used." Neuron A fires neuron B, neuron B fires neuron C, and so on around the loop, until the impulse returns to the first cell and the cycle starts its next round. This process is analogous to that which takes place in the mercury, merry-go-round type of computing-machine memory.

An even more striking similarity is the fact that both brains and

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machines use essentially the same method of insuring the accuracy of their calculations. A new device, the Binac or binary automatic computer, can do about 3,600,000 multiplications an hour, and contains a built-in error eliminator. Binac consists of two 700-tube subassemblies, both solving the same problem in parallel. Each step is double-checked and, if the subassemblies arrive at different results, Binac automatically stops until a defective tube is replaced or a broken connection re-soldered. The chance that both parts of the machine will make a mistake at the same time is extremely small.

The brain applies the same technique to minimize the risk of illusion. It is important that what we see represents a real object or event in the environment, and the eye is designed to insure that this is actually what happens. The retina at the back of the eye contains 100,000,000 cells that respond chemically when light strikes them. But there are only some 1,000,000 nerve fibers runing from the retina to the brain. In other words, an average of a hundred light-sensitive cells are connected to every fiber, and the response of a single one of them is not enough to make us see a speck of light. A large number must be affected within a fraction of a second before the fiber transmits a light signal to the higher centers of the brain.

This is insurance at the input or sensory level. But the process is repeated over and over again throughout the entire brain and nervous system. The information that pours into our eyes, ears and other sense organs is continually channeled into parallel nerve paths and checked so many times that an object and its interpretation rarely differ enough to do us harm. These paths give the brain insurance against accidents and old age, as well as illusion. A vacuum tube can be replaced, but not a neuron. While the rest of the body's tissues are replenished with new cells, neurons do not multiply; once they are destroyed, they are lost forever. But because the nervous system has its multiple parallel paths, we can be useful citizens even with parts of our brains missing—and even though some of our neurons die as we grow older.

The comparison between brains and computers has come all the way from a newspaper headline to a biological theory, and provides one of the most impressive examples of the power of analogy in scientific thinking. Man's efforts to understand himself and the

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universe have been marked by a long succession of analogies, each of which endured for a time and was ultimately replaced by a more sophisticated image that made more sense in the light of newly acquired knowledge. Atoms, which were indestructible structures with hooks on them to the Greeks, have progressed through two analogies in our times—billiard balls and miniature planetary systems. Primitive man thought stars were holes in the sky; Aristotle considered them spheres of pure celestial fire.

The brain has been compared to a sort of air-conditioning system which cooled hot vapors rising from the heart, an accordion, a telephone switchboard and—as of the year 1949—to an electronic calculating machine. The latest comparison has been productive and promises to be so for a long time. The only danger is that we will come to swear by it. The nervous system is far more complex than any system of electronic circuits, and many biologists are already disturbed by the tendency to replace "the brain is like a calculating machine" by "the brain *is* a calculating machine." The first sentence is a simile, the second a metaphor. And metaphors are bad science.

A poet has a right, almost a duty, to affirm passionately his assertion that life is a dream, but the scientist's images are not meant for ardent defense or justification. The experimental evidence will take care of that. The word "like" in a scientific simile should not be dropped; it reminds us that we are inventing and learning, that we are not dealing in final answers. The brain is not a calculating machine, any more than it was a telephone switchboard—and we shall find other analogies when we know more biology. We talk in circles when we ask what the brain "really" is, because reality has meaning only as a collection of our currently most useful analogies.

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Publishing: Industry and Profession

John Farrar

THIS morning I received a letter from a woman who said she had been "humiliated" by a letter I had written, telling her that we could not publish the book manuscript she had sent us. She said my letter was "typical of the cynical wisdom of a case-hardened publisher." I am surprised that she did not write "commercial publisher."

This week, also, I heard an informal talk before a group of book publishers by William Miller, a serious and able young man, whose *The Book Industry: A Report of the Public Library Inquiry* has recently been published (Columbia University Press). Mr. Miller once wrote a *Fortune* article on the same subject. He is the layman judging from research and interviews. His report is admirable, a kind of bringing up-to-date of the *Economic Survey of the Book Industry, 1930-31* by O. H. Cheney, recently reissued by R. R. Bowker. It is, however, strangely touched by both the jargon of the advertising agencies and the news magazines, and the ivory-tower point of view of certain academicians and librarians. Another new book from England, Michael Joseph's *The Adventure of Publishing* (imported by R. R. Bowker), and many other recent dissertations, like Mr. Miller's, seem to ask "Why is the book industry not an industry?" Mr. Joseph's book is occasionally tinged with fire for his job; but not once in Mr. Miller's did I recognize the passion and the imagination, the far from cynical wisdom of the men (some of whom he had interviewed) who sat around me as he spoke. I have found far more cynics among university professors and librarians than were present in that room. Librarians and professors as individuals I love dearly. But, having experienced the bureaucracy of both army and government in two wars, and the bureaucracy of a huge business

✪ As author, editor and publisher, JOHN FARRAR has had a long and varied career. He was one of the founders of Farrar and Rinehart (now Rinehart & Company) and later of Farrar, Straus, of which he is now chairman of the board.

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(as editor of the then Doubleday-Doran), it is my opinion that the petty politics of academic bureaucracy are greater and far more sterilizing than any other; and that libraries, as well as universities, are aflutter with intrigue, and with that peculiar and dreadful activity of so many subsidized endeavors, the necessity—often fancied—of pleasing the man with the money bags. All wealthy alumni and library trustees are not idiots!

Dull as book publishers may be, and, according to our critics, unable to "get together on anything," I consider that the commercial publishers of the United States are as much concerned with art as with commerce, and that they are less tinged by cheapening, bribery and corruption than many other business groups in the country. Moreover, they do get together. Numbers of them spend much of their time talking shop together. Their lack of a certain type of business cooperation is at least partly a calculated risk. Publishers are strongly jealous of the independence and competition that make them as they are.

I had intended this article to detail the trials and hurdles that face us, to comment on the progress and the lack of progress in the reorganization of the industry, particularly in coordination with the bookseller, and in directing public relations. (I still think it would be worth the effort to try to convince people that owning books is as important for the home as dentifrices.) But I am more and more aware of just how important his individuality is to the publisher, and how constantly it is being attacked. So instead of carping, I should like to point out our undoubted strength. Mr. Miller kept referring in his talk to "your" books, meaning the publishers' books. We know, Mr. Miller, that they are not *our* books. They belong, eventually, to the writer and his public. We are the custodians, and it is a trust that involves deep obligations which most of us realize.

It is clear, I presume, that I am not discussing the publication of textbooks, but of books designed for what is commonly called "the general public." Textbook publishing must, however, be thought of in the background, for it is on textbook rewards that many publishers depend for the solid support of the rest of their lists. I wish every college president in the country could be a disembodied auditor at the conferences of publishers and their "college travelers."

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These gentlemen who collect gossip, manuscripts and orders for books across the thorny paths of *academe* know more about the American college at its best and worst than any other group. They know the back entrances to the ivory towers, and where the ivy on the walls is imitation. In fact, if you wish to become the head of a department, they are good men to know. They're often the king-makers. That, however, is another matter.

The publishing industry has, I believe, become entirely too self-conscious, too quick to listen to those who would term it "big business"; it is confusing its own Cassandras with seers, and is blind to its own achievements. In another magazine, I have noted the effect of some of these current phenomena on authors, and pointed out the psychological block that seems to me to exist between American writers and their readers.*

"Two main factors have caused it," I wrote, "the intense self-consciousness which has grown up between the writer and the reader in the United States, and the writer's retreat to the schools, colleges and universities since World War II." The development of the university presses, healthy and useful in many ways, could further emphasize this danger. Chester Kerr, the digest of whose survey of these presses appeared in *The Saturday Review of Literature* last May, has given us many facts and some conclusions on this phase of American publishing, and it is only when a Stephen Spender (in an article in *Horizon*) seems to see the white hope of literature glowing from them, as the ideals of commercial publishing crumble or come to rest entirely in the hands of *New Directions*, that I revolt.

With a galaxy of these surveys and reports, with critical radio programs, with the taxi driver on the corner ready to discuss publishing as you step into his cab, and with no dinner party free of the man who suddenly tells you how to run your business, one could be tempted to get away from it all. Somehow one doesn't. One does notice, however, that many of the recommendations for change have a slightly authoritarian flavor, interesting as they may be. When one hears how magnificently German publishing was organized before

* "The Condition of the American Writer." *College English* and the *English Journal*, October, 1949.

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World War II, one remembers also how speedily Mr. Hitler was able to take it over and use it for his vile designs. One does not care to think of what Russian publishing must be like under Stalin. It has occurred to me that if many of the ideas for improving our industry were followed, we might well employ a publishing Happy Chandler, establish the major league among publishers, develop the smaller houses into farm systems, regularize our scouting systems, keep a Joe Page handy to finish the books of faltering writers, own and trade the authors, so that if one list needed a Costain or a Marquand he could be traded or bought instead of stolen (author-snatching would of course be illegal), and if an editor did not win at least one book club choice a year, he would go the way of the pennantless baseball manager.

Not long ago, at a dinner, there sat next to me a business man renowned for his wisdom and probity. He has been banker and public official, and now heads a mighty organization. His life-long interest in good works, however, has not been on the petition and check-signing bench only. He has tightened his own muscles for the things in which he believes.

"I've just gone on the Board of Directors of a publishing house," he said. "We're fellow publishers now."

"Fine!" I replied. "We certainly need more like you. But why?"

I was thinking that, undoubtedly to aid a friend, he might have joined some house faltering in these rugged and tempestuous days. This proved a false surmise. He explained that he had joined the board of one of our most solid and finest houses, for two reasons: first, business, although he smiled as he put the commercial first; and then he said: "After all, you fellows are defending one of the last open lines of freedom of speech and expression, aren't you?"

It did not surprise me that he had realized this fact; but that he had followed his knowledge by action was one of the most heartening statements I had heard in years. For similar deeds and faith I am grateful to my own present partners and board of directors.

He smiled again, and went on. "I've only been to one meeting. I don't intend immediately to reorganize the publishing business. I want to learn. Whatever happens to your show must be done by the boys who know what it's all about."

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"You must be wondering," I said, remembering other discussions of the state of publishing with bankers and business men over the past quarter of a century. "And I'll bet you'd like to know about those advances to authors!"

"Indeed I would," and he turned to me eagerly. "I can't see one economically sound reason for that particular item in the publishers' statements. I know there must be reasons. Please tell me."

"If you think of the Bell Telephone, or other commercial scientific laboratories, of their fostering of young scientists and, I presume, their financing of possible inventions, you may see a commercial parallel. Authors must live while they write. The system has abuses, and there's a lot more to be said about it which you'll hear from your new associates."

I'm sure he has discovered by now the reasons for one of the large gambles in our world, and many more of its contradictions and innumerable details, small and large, from the exact designing of a book for a particular public to the special qualities of voice and temperament required of the girl at the publisher's telephone switchboard.

The publishing of books in the United States, since Puritan days, has always been attended by feuds and contradictions. The question of the price of books, for example, of the "cheap book," has been argued fiercely, and experiments and even battles have been carried on almost from the start—one of the bitterest of them among Boston, Philadelphia and New York printers in the days just preceding and following the Civil War. The miracle has been that publishing developed at all, so often has it been in the hands of the sharp and downright (sometimes magnificently so) pigheaded individualist.

In my own lifetime, publishing was at its most difficult in the early thirties. Publishing is becoming as difficult now, under conditions in many ways (although far from all) similar to those of 1932. You have read of mounting production costs, of continuing complex relations with the booksellers who have their own difficulties, of the ironical effects of the war boom in books, of the vanishing medium-priced reprint market and the rise of the twenty-five-cent book, of the effect of the book clubs on both the business and the editorial side of publishing, of remainders and returns. These facts and uncertainties tend to cut down the publication of the marginal book, to make

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publication more uncertain for the new author. Smaller firms may find it convenient to merge or to combine some of their business departments. Yet even so, the author or the publisher who tries to meet these conditions by producing synthetic books to suit fancied "trends," whether at the behest of book clubs, the motion pictures, or the pollsters, would be foolish. In the long run, it doesn't work! Moreover, I believe that the core of the industry is not following this course, and that those who point it out with too much emphasis are exaggerating.

Early in his book, Mr. Miller says:

> Yet there are problems facing American book publishing and threats to its continued health and expansion. Trade book publishing, with which the public libraries and hence this segment of the Public Library Inquiry are most concerned, probably faces more difficult problems than does any other branch. The most difficult of these lie ouside the industry and cannot be solved by it alone. They stem from certain key circumstances in American history, such as Negro slavery, the sparse settlement of the early West, the growth and concentration of corporate and church power, the movement of higher-income urban dwellers to suburbs free of city taxes. These and related conditions continue to shape American life today. Their impact upon the book industry is felt most directly in the form of inadequate government expenditures for the education, in schools and libraries, of sizable portions of the population and in the form of business, religious, and political pressures that result in the censorship and intimidation of writers, editors, and publishers.

This point of view, held by many laymen, seems far too pessimistic and generalized. To be sure, censorship must be fought, and, more than ever, one must be wary of pressures; but I am not conscious that editors are being pushed around in any such fashion. May it not be that if we are looking for pressure-groups under every bush, we will imagine persecutions and develop neurotic and unnecessary cautions?

I believe that the good editor in publishing has always been willing to face the business side and other practical considerations. I think that if he doesn't, he doesn't belong in publishing. The growing legend that Maxwell Perkins, one of the greatest of all, confined himself to an exclusively editorial concern with authors is nonsense. He may have believed this was the ideal, but he couldn't have remained

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a successful publisher-editor (I prefer this term) for six months without concerning himself with the business problems of his list and doing things about them. In fact, he did! Let's stop this silly talk about the vanishing of the old-fashioned editor. The best of them that I have known, over the past thirty years and more—back to Henry Holt and George Haven Putnam—were all as much publisher as editor.

On the other hand, my friend the banker's approach to publishing illustrates the dual motivation of many of the involved persons. This banker was both commercially minded and honestly "dedicated" to a cause, and there are, for what they are worth, many such "dedicated" men in trade book publishing.

At this point, I'd like to let Michael Joseph, once literary agent, frequently author, now successful publisher, speak for me. To quote, then, from his *The Adventure of Publishing:*

> The publisher's chief problem can be stated quite simply. He must make enough profit out of his current books to pay his expenses, create a back list which will provide a margin of profit, and at the same time build up a reputation which will attract good books and authors to his list and secure for him the respect of the book trade.

And again, two pages later:

> It will readily be seen that successful publishing must be a combination of art and commerce. If it is a mistake to publish only for profit, it may be just as fatal to publish books on their literary merit alone. It is, I think, also dangerous, if not necessarily disastrous, for any individual to publish only those books which satisfy his own aesthetic appreciation. One of the most brilliant American publishers of our time, George Doran, once said that a publisher of books must be ". . . a mixed farmer, sow first in this field and then in that, and rotate his crops, if he is successfully to distribute his product; for, after all, publishing, like any other line of merchandising, must accomplish distribution, to attain success in any degree."

You will have discovered that what worries me about the current state of publishing is not so much its vexing detail and organization as it is the patronizing of its practitioners by the academic world on the one hand and the big business world on the other. One of the wisest of publishers, Malcolm Johnson, a man who has for years

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done untiring work for the publishing industry as a whole, in commenting on the current criticism of publishing by those outside, said: "They see the surface of the soil but they don't know enough about the geology to judge anything but appearances." When I read books like Mr. Miller's, I feel embarrassed that this is what we publishers seem like to outsiders, and that he gathered the material for his book from us. This is worth being alarmed about—when you don't recognize your own portrait.

There is the talk of "good" books and "bad" books, of publishing only the "finest." What, indeed, is the finest? I quote again from Michael Joseph:

> It is often said that too much "tripe" is published, but what is tripe? A president of the Publishers Association in a letter to the *Times* defined tripe as the sort of book one wouldn't want to read oneself. The books which you and I despise presumably give pleasure to others. There is no getting away from the truth which L. A. G. Strong and others have emphasized, that readers often graduate from Sexton Blake and Wild West stories to Dickens and the classics. And, it may be asked, what right has anyone to deprive the lowbrows of their favorite reading matter?
>
> The good health of the publishing trade depends on freedom to publish. Censorship is an evil which every right-minded publisher will vigorously oppose; and censorship is not less dangerous if it begins by operating on the ground of "literary merit." It is tempting to say, "Why clutter up the market with so many rubbishy books?" but the difficulty is to appoint the censors. *Quis custodiet custodes?*

It would be a bore, for me at any rate, to publish only for the "highbrow." I like the "middlebrow." I like the "lowbrow." I have always despised the literary snob. I like a good story, and I am bored by a pretentious, dull book, no matter what scholarly cloak it wears. Most publishers have made all kinds of errors of taste and judgment, and I probably more than most; but in closing this piece, here is a personal illustration of my point that seems to me appropriate and is not intended to be unkind.

When I was an undergraduate at Yale, I sat under and worshiped the great Chauncey Brewster Tinker. His scholarship is unquestioned. His prose style has wit and grace. His lectures are marvels of lucidity and power. Because of him, a part of my mind has always stayed in the Eighteenth Century. But ever since I became a pub-

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lisher, Mr. Tinker has shaken his finger at me sadly and told me that I have "sold out" to commerce. Perhaps he does not realize how profoundly his attitude has affected me. Perhaps he has been joking. If so, it has been an acid joke, and it has hurt. As I write tonight, looking at the filled shelves around me, I myself, with all respect for the scholars and with admiration for their accomplishments, would still rather have played my part in the publication of such books as *Revolt in the Desert*, *John Brown's Body*, and *Porgy* than to have been able to collect the complete literary remains of James Boswell or Sir Horace Walpole. To put it another way, Mr. Tinker, I would rather have known and published Walpole and Boswell, than to have spent my life contemplating their literary relics.

I have just returned from two weeks with a group of writers, editors, publishers—met to discuss their problems at the first Fiction Writers' Conference at Marlboro College, Vermont. It was a refreshing and humbling experience. When such honest talk can be found among a group of people engaged in the enterprise of communication by the written word, there's nothing too gravely wrong with the art of writing (and let's call it an art) nor with the profession of publishing (and let's call it a profession). The publisher is nothing without the writer, and the integrity of the truly first-class writer never flags—he's a stubborn creature. I suspect he'll see to it that the publisher stays stubborn too—stubborn and ornery.

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David Antiphons

Ralph de Toledano

(O Sapientia, O Adonai, O radix Jesse)

"he will whet his sword"

In the muted wood
I walked alone
till screaming angels
moved like a knife
across my eyes.

Lord, in the huts
and in the mud your angels
screamed to the heavens
and the sheltered wood
was quiet no longer.

In the night I waited
torn in my sleep
seeing the sky unfolded,
feeling the earth unhinged:
and then I knew, my Lord,
and then I knew.

"hold not thy peace at my tears"

Untouched among the winds
you came, making the night holy.

No hands to greet you, no bursting
shout to make a mark on time,
no glory to mis-speak your name.

Gravely among the men who courted death
you sat, meek to their clamor, cool
to their plighted arrogance.

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But in your hand, the seed opened,
and in the rending noise and terror
silence was everywhere.

"*bow down thine ear*"

Turn to me in the night, Lord,
mouth twisted in irony and pain.
Seek me out in the night,
unhallowed in the flesh.

Strike me with gladness, Lord,
and unforgiveness, stiff-necked.

Break out the stars, my Lord,
and sing or wail:
let penitents cluster.

"*under his tongue is mischief*"

Into what riveted cycle,
Lord, have we been thrust,
groaning at the blistered nerve?

What is the new concrescence
which writhes in naughty purpose?
And is this sudden night, O Lord,
a casual pit or a Cartesian well?

Briefly in Spring the awkward pattern
urges a passion and subsides;
briefly the burgeoning excellence
gutters in the backwash of days.

So when the tropic echo wanes,
when the heart is cold again,
old birds a-croak defile renewal.
Then is it done, my Lord, all done?

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"with a double heart"

Where will the strength be found
for morning's work
and then at evening's end
the power to pray?

Where will I find the hand
of benison, in priestly
gesture, when overhead
the clouds are muttering?

And how can faith intenible
come to hand salvation,
war succumbing to peace,
the heart's flutter stilled?

The ticking clock,
the ticking mind,
the clutching eye,
the tortured arm—
who is the exequatur,
my Lord or me?

"beside the still waters"

Shepherd, in the freighted night
the streets resound with want of you,
but in the rented rooms,
death frivols on a tousled bed.

What cabalistic sign explains
the skin unbuttoned, the bone defiled?
What swinging bulb anoints the head
and glitters on the trembling cup?

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Shepherd, the shrouded gullies
muffle your step, unvoicing timbrel,
lute, and saxophone as dancers poise.
Then in the skirling mists your lamp
uncoils a shadow: comforted I lay me down.

"a young lion lurking
in the secret places"

Listen, Hunter, the tears
are no more tears tonight:
look, they have dried
and fall brittle to the ground.

Spacious, the glint of skies
engulfs the solid earth:
listen, Hunter, the tears
crackle in the brush.

And still untorn
among the thickets
runs the doe:
listen with me, the tears
are like a heartbeat.

Hunter and Shepherd, hear
the doe in the rustling brake:
listen, the night is tears,
and the day a pillar of smoke.

✪ The poems of RALPH DE TOLEDANO, an editor of *Newsweek*, have appeared in *Commonweal*, the *Saturday Review of Literature*, *Poetry*, *Commentary* and other magazines. This poem is the third part of an extended work tentatively entitled "The Apocrypha of Limbo."

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The Case of the *Nation*

David K. Berninghausen

The Nation, *one of the oldest liberal magazines in America, was banned from the New York City public school libraries on June 8, 1948. The superintendents admit that this is censorship, but, they feel, defensible censorship because of Paul Blanshard's articles describing and criticizing the official position of the Catholic Church in certain secular matters. Despite the efforts of the Ad Hoc Committee to Lift the Ban on the* Nation, *headed by Archibald MacLeish, the ban was renewed for a second year in June, 1949.*

THE ISSUE involved in the *Nation* ban is not the study of religious beliefs, nor is it tolerance versus intolerance, as the superintendents of the New York City schools implied in their published defense of the ban. The issue is freedom of inquiry, freedom to examine alternative points of view before reaching a conclusion.

A student's freedom to examine all points of view is restricted when a central board assumes the right to decide what shall *not* be available in the high school libraries. The nine New York City superintendents require *all* library materials to be selected from their centrally approved list. Under this system no librarian or teacher is free to put non-listed materials in the library, except by special permission secured from the central office by a long and cumbersome process.

✪ Head of the Cooper Union Libraries and professor on the academic staff, DAVID K. BERNINGHAUSEN teaches philosophy in the humanities department of the Cooper Union Engineering School. Mr. Berninghausen is chairman of the American Library Association's Committee on Intellectual Freedom.

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This system is not only contrary to the recommendations of professional librarians, but it is radically different from the general practice in high school libraries as revealed in a recent survey conducted by the Ad Hoc Committee to Lift the Ban on the *Nation*.

Most libraries have found it economical to centralize the *routines* of ordering materials, but it is not common practice to centralize book selection. Eighteen high schools in New York State replied to a questionnaire sent out by the Ad Hoc Committee. Not one of these schools uses any type of *permissive* list. Eleven use *advisory* lists, but these do not in any way restrict selection to an exclusive or approved list. In each of these schools, selection is done by the librarian, or by some combination of librarians, teachers and principal. Selection of periodicals is entirely unrestricted.

Thirty-four large cities throughout the country also replied to the questionnaire. Only four of these use any permissive list similar to that used by New York City; six use advisory lists; and twenty-four use no lists. Four state that they follow the recommendations of the American Library Association. Five state that for magazine selection they use the accepted guide by Laura K. Martin, a professor of Library Science at the University of Kentucky (see below).

School administrators in other cities support grass roots selection of library materials by teachers and librarians without restrictions from a central office. The First Assistant Superintendent of Schools of Chicago writes:

> For the Chicago Public High Schools no lists of magazines and periodicals are officially established, either as exclusive or recommended. Each building principal, within the appropriation set up for the purpose and with the advice and counsel of his faculty members, is free to order the magazines and periodicals which he and his teachers feel are of benefit in the teaching of the individual subject under consideration.

It is becoming common practice to delegate the authority to select library materials to a trained professional librarian in each individual school. It is an established administrative principle that only personnel who are close to the situation can adequately understand that situation and prescribe for it. Cincinnati reports:

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In Cincinnati the librarian in each school selects and requisitions periodicals. Recommendations for specific purchases are made by teachers and correlate with the curricular needs. Courses of study are constantly revised. Committees studying these revisions involve librarians as well as other staff persons. When periodicals are used on a class set basis, these purchases are made by the individual school and are reported to the Department of Instruction.

The Superintendent of Schools in River Forest, Illinois, writes:

All our lists of magazines and periodicals for public school library use are advisory and recommended. We have none which are permissive or exclusive.

We continue to be of the opinion that magazines and periodicals of reputable publishers must stay within the reach of our public school personnel regardless of the attitudes which they express in matters of politics, religion, economics, education, and other topics of current interest. We believe that we should have both sides of the story presented on any critical issue, and welcome magazines of any publishers.

In contrast to these generally accepted policies and practices, in New York City school libraries the head librarian, whose office is at headquarters, sends the centrally approved lists to the principal of each high school. The list is then turned over to the individual school's librarian and kept in the school library. Each principal consults with the chairmen of his departments. The wishes of the teachers are made known to the chairmen. "The final decision rests with the principal who is, of course, the responsible head of the school," writes Associate Superintendent Frederic Ernst. But it is important to remember that the choices of librarians and teachers, and even the final decision of the principal, are strictly limited by the approved list.

In reply to the questionnaire, Dr. Ernst stated:

You should know, in the first place, that all purchases of listed books and magazines are made under contracts with the publishers or jobbers. These contracts, required by the City Charter, usually make it possible for the Board of Education to get rather favorable prices. As the amount of clerical work involved in ordering is very great, we generally try to keep at a minimum requests for non-listed, that is non-contract items, because each of these items requires a special contract.

In this statement Dr. Ernst seems to be saying that permissive lists are necessary to save clerical work and to secure favorable discounts.

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It is clear that he has failed to distinguish between the *routines of purchasing* materials and *selection* of materials. True, most libraries have agreements with jobbers to buy large quantities of books or magazines at a favorable discount, but there is no reason to suppose that the size of this discount depends upon whether selection is made from an approved list or from the whole field of print. True, it is economical to centralize the *routines* of purchasing, but the superintendent has given no pertinent reasons for centralizing *control of selection*. It is very unlikely that any economy results from the use of a permissive list, but even if there were any point to Dr. Ernst's remarks, would it be worth the sacrifice of the policy recommended by professional librarians, the policy of selecting the best and most usable materials for the specific situation, from the whole field of print?

And what do professional librarians recommend be done with the problem of censorship raised by the ban on the *Nation?* The Executive Board of the American Library Association has consistently urged the President of the Association, the Executive Secretary, and the Chairman of the Committee on Intellectual Freedom to do everything possible to persuade the New York Board to rescind the ban. Suppression of any point of view is in direct conflict with the Library Bill of Rights.

The American Library Association has clearly stated its position on censorship in the Library Bill of Rights. This official statement of the policies which should govern all library service in America insists upon the responsibility of the library to provide information on all sides of all questions, without special concessions to any group. It expressly states that no book shall be excluded because of the race or nationality, or the political or religious views of the writer. Anticipating censorship like that of the *Nation*, it declares that no book shall be removed because of doctrinal or partisan disapproval.

Most professional librarians would agree with Miss Laura K. Martin, who edits the standard library guide, *Magazines for High School Libraries*. Most librarians consider the whole range of magazines for adults as theoretically available for high school students. However, selection from the whole field of print is a complex task, and Miss Martin's book provides an essential guide.

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This guide lists the *Nation* as suitable for senior high school, noting the important fact that it is indexed in the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*. The author states that the open forum ideal in the selection of weekly periodicals of news comment is more essential than in any other field. The often unique point of view presented by the *Nation* is especially desirable in a balanced library that tries to achieve the open forum ideal.

> *Nation* and *New Republic* continue to represent the same leftist clientele, and each has its fervent adherents among the people who like their news edited from a frankly pro-labor, pro-social security, and pro-world cooperation viewpoint. A sharper note of criticism, biting but never carping, distinguishes part of the *Nation's* content, notably its reviews of books and the arts. . . . Its international outlook, its facility in revealing the significant details in situations, details which often clarify official silences, and the scholarly appraisals in its book reviewing columns, are contributing factors in the building of its long-standing prestige.

Miss Martin has also commented pointedly about the too common attitude that young minds must be protected by censorship:

> The immaturity of her clientele is the excuse often given for the control of reading matter. To most school librarians, the immaturity of their patrons is a challenge and not a limitation—they look upon the high school years as a precious time in which to open doors, to show young people that difference of opinion is a normal and socially valuable phenomenon. Variety in people, ideas, and media of communication stimulates intellectual activity at any age. Wise workers with young people have less fear that in a school atmosphere their students will absorb dangerous ideas, than that too soon they will close their minds to all but a familiar pattern of traditional formulae.

The New York school administration has obviously ignored the recommendations of the American Library Association and those of the foremost professional authority in the field of magazine selection. The decision to ban the *Nation* is an unwarranted restriction of the New York student's educational opportunities. By way of illustration, let us examine the way magazines are used in libraries.

Suppose that the student goes to his school library to prepare a paper on a controversial issue. (One of the most important tools he can hope to master in school is the ability to locate information.)

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He looks in the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*. This student finds six references to articles on his subject in the *Nation* and six in *Life*. He reads the six in *Life*. But his teacher has warned him, as any good teacher should, that it is dangerous to rely upon only one source of information. He asks to see the six articles in the *Nation*. They are not available.

Does this student have freedom of inquiry? Does he have an opportunity to gain experience in that most important and difficult exercise—the forming of an intelligent opinion *after* examination of all the arguments?

Suppose the situation were reversed. Considering the vivid pictorial material in the June 14, 1948, issue of *Life*, it is quite conceivable that *Life* could be banned on the same grounds as the *Nation*. These pictures of the controversy between Catholics and Protestants are liked to be much more impressive to adolescent minds than the prosy style of Paul Blanshard in the *Nation*. If *Life* were banned, would the student have freedom of inquiry?

To return to the pros and cons of the specific issue, the act of banning the *Nation* from school libraries—what can be said in defense of excluding the segment of American thought represented in the *Nation?*

On October 1, 1948, the New York City Superintendent of Schools, Dr. William Jansen, published a statement of the reasons for the ban. This document is entitled "Should Religious Beliefs Be Studied and Criticized in an American Public High School?" The arguments presented are:

1. The *Nation* was not eliminated because it criticized the policies of the Catholic Church concerning political and social issues. It was removed from the list because two of the articles entitled "Roman Catholic Science, I: Relics, Saints, Miracles" (May 15, 1948), and "Roman Catholic Science, II: Apparitions and Evolution" (May 22, 1948), did *not* deal with the policies of the Roman Catholic Church with respect to public questions. "Those two articles are devoted to a criticism of Catholic beliefs, dogmas, and religious practices. Catholic beliefs and religious practices are not only criticized but are ridiculed by innuendo."

2. The Board did not adhere to the policy of withdrawing the

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single articles that are objectionable because "It was obvious that with the publication of the two articles referred to, the editorial policy of the *Nation* had been modified to permit the publication of articles that are an attack on the Catholic religion.

3. The Board is of the opinion that it is contrary to the American public school tradition to bring religious controversies into the classrooms of the public schools. The Board will continue to see to it that there shall be no criticism of the religious beliefs of any groups in the schools of New York City.

As to the first argument—that the two articles on science "did not deal with the policies of the Roman Catholic Church with respect to public questions"—there can be considerable difference of opinion. Since when has science and the scientific method not been a public question? Many people consider the validity of science and the integrity of those who search for scientific truth essentially a religious matter. It is undoubtedly also a public question.

Lewis Mumford has commented that when Superintendent Jansen quotes twenty-one sentences to show that Catholic beliefs are criticized, and gives this as a defense of the ban on the *Nation,* he commits himself to the proposition that no religious belief held by any sect or creed may be discussed critically in any magazine on the approved list. This is untenable on several counts. It implies that the Board must be able to approve every idea to be found in the library, which could only mean that the library was limited to what the Board believes. If carried to its logical conclusion, this would mean that no magazine that criticized Voodooism in the West Indies could be approved for library use, lest it offend the religious beliefs of a minority. It would, finally, if rigidly followed, permit any person or group to demand the removal of any distasteful idea, for such a censor need only claim that this idea is critical of a belief he holds on faith.

In a letter to Dr. Jansen, Mr. Mumford says of these articles on relics and miracles:

> Mr. Blanshard's attitude toward miracle-working relics is no more iconoclastic than that of the head of the priory of Crammont in the Middle Ages, who implored its founder, St. Stephen of Thiern, to work no more miracles, because he was turning the monks' minds away from religion. The only

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question about these quotations is whether Mr. Blanshard's facts are straight. I note you do not question him on this ground.

This last sentence by Mr. Mumford emphasizes a very important principle in the American tradition of free inquiry. Traditionally, Americans have considered the proper reaction to unpleasant statements to be refutation of those statements—when and if refutation is possible. Banning "objectionable" ideas is not permissable treatment in a democratic society.

The second argument assumes a great deal on very little evidence. Professional librarians appreciate the value of *complete* sets of reference periodicals, and most of them would not approve of the policy the Board apparently sometimes follows, of withdrawing single objectionable articles. But even supposing this were a defensible policy, it has been firmly established by the courts, for example in the *Ulysses* case, that the suppression of a publication can only be justified on the basis of consideration of the publication as a whole. In suppressing all future issues of the *Nation* the Board assumed much more than can be justified by the evidence. They not only banned the *Nation* for a year, assuming that it had adopted an editorial policy of publishing attacks on the Catholic religion, but renewed the ban for a second year. The Board even refused to give any official reasons for the extension of the ban.

In regard to this second argument, Nathan Frankel of the National Lawyer's Guild wrote to Dr. Jansen: "One swallow does not make a summer. Two articles do not amount to a change in editorial policy extending consistently and continuously over a fifty year period."

Dale DeWitt, regional head of the Unitarian Ministry wrote: "To pretend that the *Nation* must, because of the Blanshard articles, frequently print anti-religious articles is an extreme decision. One is inclined to conclude that the Board is eager to find some way to eliminate the *Nation* from the school shelves."

The third and chief argument presented by the Board, that religious education and religious controversies must not be brought into the classroom, is strangely irrelevant. Religious education is not the issue. The issue is unusually clear and simple: Shall students have

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freedom of inquiry, freedom to examine alternative points of view, before reaching a conclusion?

Do the superintendents hold that a library is responsible for approving and advocating every argument of every author of every article in the various magazines in the library? This is obviously absurd. The virtue of a good library is that alternative points of view are available to anyone who wishes to search them out. The well balanced library is the best protection any school can have against the teacher who has committed himself to belief in one system of ideas, and who might wish to indoctrinate his students in that system.

The very title of the published statement of the reasons for the ban, "Should Religious Beliefs Be Studied and Criticized In An American Public School?" is irrelevant. It is worse than irrelevant, for it can only serve to confuse and mislead the casual reader. It is evidence of an attempt to erect a straw man to draw attention from the real threat inherent in the ban to the principles of free speech, free press, and free inquiry so fundamental to a free society.

Any comment on the New York Board's statement in defense of the ban on the *Nation* should include the following analysis published by Mr. Archibald MacLeish and the Ad Hoc Committee to Lift the Ban on the *Nation*, under the title "An Appeal to Reason and Conscience."

The question before the Board was not the question of the suitability of the *Nation* as a text book in the City's schools. The question was whether the *Nation*, which had long been one of the periodicals available to New York City students, should continue to be available to them. In ruling that it should not, and in giving its publication of the Blanshard articles as justification, the Board in effect enunciated two propositions, both of which in our opinion are contrary to American ideas of freedom and destructive of American principles.

The first is the proposition that any published material regarded, or which could be regarded, as objectionable on grounds of faith or creed by any group in the community should be excluded from the community's schools and school libraries.

The second is the proposition that the appearance in any publication of material of this kind justifies the suppression in schools and school libraries of the publication as a whole. In the case of a periodical this means that the past publication of such material justifies the suppression of future issues regardless of the general character and record of the periodical.

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The vice of the second of these two propositions is apparent upon its face. The exclusion from public institutions, by public officials, of future issues of newspapers, magazines or other periodicals, on the basis of particular material published in the past, rather than on the basis of the character of the publication as a whole, cannot be defended even as censorship. It is extra-judicial punishment pure and simple, and it involves a power of intimidation and possible blackmail in officials of government which no free society can tolerate and which a free press could not long survive. . . .

The first proposition—that any publication objectionable on grounds of faith to any group in the community should be suppressed in the schools—though more plausible on its face, is equally vicious in fact. It is a repudiation, on one side, of the principle of freedom of education; on the other, of the principle of the separation of church and state. The meaning of that latter tenet, so far as education is concerned, is that no church may use the public schools as instruments of propaganda. To give the churches of the country, or any of their members who might seek to exercise it, the power to determine by simple veto what shall *not* be available to students in the public schools; or worse, for public officials to exclude automatically anything any group might be expected to wish excluded, is to do by negative action what the Constitution and the Courts forbid by positive action. . . .

The truth is that censorship and suppression in all their forms impoverish human life and warp the human mind in an increasing and progressive sickness. Those who practice them are led by the logic of one exclusion to the tragedy of the next. If the suppression of the *Nation* for having published the Blanshard articles is allowed to stand, and if the propositions upon which it is justified are accepted, the consequences to the schools, to the press and to the vitality of American freedom may well be very serious indeed. . . .

To bar from the schools of New York future issues of one of the country's leading periodicals with a history of responsible journalism since 1865 because a past issue or issues contained paragraphs which one of the many groups which compose this country found objectionable seems to us a violation of the most fundamental principles of American equality. We believe the wrong should be righted at once, not so much in the interest of the *Nation* as in the interest of the people of the United States.

What is the philosophy of education which would justify the apparently arbitrary and stubborn disregard for the Constitution of the United States, professional library standards, and the traditional American concept of free inquiry?

It appears that these officials frown upon inclusion of controversial subjects in their curriculum and their library. If they look on textbooks and library books as authoritative sources of information, not to be questioned by teacher or pupil, once they have been placed on the permissive list, then the ban is reasonable. If they look on the

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whole educational process as established solely to transmit the orthodoxies of the past, then how do they decide whether the orthodoxies transmitted shall be Catholic, Jewish or Protestant? Surely, in the twentieth century, these educators cannot conceive of the pupil's task as simply to memorize the "correct" opinions placed before him. And yet, it is difficult to imagine any other view of education which would justify such characteristics as strict centralization of control over library acquisition and censorship of the *Nation*, a magazine widely recognized as desirable for school libraries.

If the New York student is required to read "the truth" in a textbook, take notes as his instructor presents the same material in a lecture, and then prove that he "knows" this truth by writing it on an examination paper, then certainly the banning of certain "incorrect" ideas is essential. But this kind of education has long been supplanted by an approach to teaching and learning that encourages the student to develop his own critical powers. Is it wise—is it even safe—to produce robots who have only "received opinions" upon which to base their actions?

If our nation's schools are built upon the authoritarian attitude which simply requires that students shall make the correct verbal responses, then the nation will be cursed with millions of new citizens able to think only in terms of black or white, dogmatic right or wrong. Educators and parents need only reflect that there are various possible interpretations of known facts, that sometimes part of the truth is suppressed, that any one man's interpretation is likely to be only a part of the truth, and that the postulates of even such a "positive" science as physics are constantly changing, to recognize the danger of continuing to produce non-thinking automatons.

The whole history of ideas indicates that knowledge is not static, that knowledge is always in a process of becoming. Alfred North Whitehead once said that we should remember that the reason certain books are called classics is that their authors exercised their creative powers to adventure beyond the established patterns of their times. The thoughts of John Wycliffe, Galileo, Paine, Emerson or Darwin were not approved by the orthodox minds of their contemporaries. Their books might even be objectionable today to some self-appointed censors. But their ideas led to new concepts

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of reality, and therefore changed or replaced our earlier knowledge.

The censors of the *Nation*, like all censors in America, must be reminded that the comfort of an official and exclusive doctrine is a forbidden luxury for democratic educators. True, such a doctrine would protect the educator, by making it clear what he must teach and what he must avoid. But this kind of teaching, with all its oversimplifications, will produce only immature minds, oblivious to any necessary qualifications which must accompany any carefully stated proposition. The tendency to think only in terms of black or white, and to insist that everyone must conform by believing in what appears white, and shunning what appears black, is even now too evident in our society.

But the most disturbing question raised by this unfortunate episode in American educational history has still to be considered. What do the high school students of New York think of this ban? They cannot take at face value the loud protestations of their school authorities that they are being educated for citizenship in a democracy. They can have little respect for their schools, when they have such clear and positive knowledge that they are not permitted *freedom of inquiry*. Can they really believe that they are being given the best possible opportunity to learn to live in a democratic society? Perhaps a good case could be presented to the effect that our youth must be disillusioned sometime, but not many educators would be comfortable in the knowledge that their students were disillusioned by their teachers' failure to live up to the American ideal of free inquiry.

Can a student accept a partial right of free inquiry and retain his faith in American freedom? It is more likely that he will find substantiation in this banning of the *Nation* for what he has already suspected: that his educators are "old pretenders" who may give lip service to the tradition of free inquiry, but in reality follow the policy stated so well by the venerable Professor of Worldly Wisdom in Samuel Butler's *Erewhon:*

> It is not our business to help students to think for themselves. . . . Our duty is to ensure that they will think as we do, or at any rate, as we hold it expedient to say we do.

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Metals and the Standard of Living

Howard A. Meyerhoff

WHAT we choose to call "modern industrial civilization" is so obviously dependent upon metals that scientists, economists, and even diplomats have from time to time indulged in much loose thinking about the relationship. Historically, the industrial revolution derived from the blast furnace, in which coking coal and iron ore were combined for the mass production of machines. Credit for the ensuing radical changes in the standard of living has, for the most part, been shared by coal and iron. It is pertinent to ask whether the credit has been correctly assigned.

Superfically, a case can be made for the fuel and the metal which have played this vital role. Britain, where the industrial revolution had its birth and where it first developed into maturity, exploited native coal and iron, and rose to power with the backing of her own mineral wealth. Ruhr coal and Lorraine iron brought industrial and military pre-eminence to Germany. In larger countries, such as the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, industrial patterns evolved in genetic relationship with coal fields and accessible deposits of iron ore. Appalachian and Eastern Interior coals have been conveniently joined with Lake Superior iron, and an important development has centered around local deposits of these two raw materials in Alabama. In the Ukraine and its margins, the Donets Basin has furnished the fuel for the Krivoi Rog iron, and the producing areas form the industrial nucleus of European Russia.

✪ HOWARD A. MEYERHOFF was for twenty-five years professor of geology and geography at Smith College before becoming Administrative Secretary of the American Association for the Advancement of Science last January. Field studies of natural resources in many countries of the Western Hemisphere and service on the National War Labor Board provided some of the background material for this article, which is based upon an address delivered last August 23 in the United Nations Economic and Social Council at a plenary meeting of the U.N. Scientific Conference on the Conservation and Utilization of Resources.

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Elsewhere in the world, however, heavy industry has taken root more slowly, and it is in these regions that we can more critically analyze the factors affecting growth. In the western United States, for example, innumerable studies and surveys have been directed toward the establishment of steel mills whose products might compete with those shipped overland or via the Panama Canal from eastern centers of production. The exigencies of war forced the issue, and the steel mill at Fontana, California, was compelled to seek its coking coal from mines 800 miles away in Utah. Russia assembled raw materials that were mined 1,200 miles apart when steel centers were constructed in Western Siberia at Magnitogorsk in the Ural Mountains, and at Stalinsk in the Kuznetsk Basin. Whether these and other newer developments in heavy industry are founded on a sound economic structure that will enable them to endure has not yet been proved, but they illustrate a trend that calls for analysis.

Although coking coal and iron ore are the *sine qua non* of heavy industry, it does not follow that high standards of living in the countries that possess either or both of these raw materials are directly or even genetically related to them. One need merely compare the poverty of the masses in Bihar and Orissa in northeastern India, where one of the largest steel operations in Asia is located, with the relative prosperity of the Danes, who have neither coal nor iron, to realize that possession of mineral raw materials bears at best a casual relation to standards of living. Nor should it be concluded that the proverbial wealth of metallic resources has been diverted to make the capitalist rich and to keep the masses at subsistence levels. For the steel mill laborer at Gary, employed by American capital, knows a far higher standard of living than the mill hand at Magnitogorsk, who works for the Communist government. And the latter is far better off than his counterpart in the Tata Iron and Steel Works of northeast India, where operations are managed by private interests. The facts offer no support whatever for ideologies.

Labor organizations may claim some credit for the high wage levels and hence for the standard of living achieved by workers in American mills, for it has taken pressure from organized groups to increased wages and to improve working conditions to such limits as the steel industry can bear. The industry can hardly point with

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pride to the sordid housing conditions that it condoned, until a comparatively recent date, in the coal-mining and steel districts of the United States and Britain. Although the enterprises which were initiated under state capitalism have, in general, started on a higher economic and sociological plane than those begun by private capital, the former started late in the history of the steel industry and hence had advantages that were unavailable to private capital. The latter pioneered and built the industry; it staked hard-won savings, knowing that the cost of failure was bankruptcy; it created employment where none existed and, for the most part, under conditions where standards of health, safety, housing and general living were nonexistent or only vaguely defined. Belatedly entering the field, state capital found an established industry, with clearly delineated markets; with taxpayers' money to back the enterprises, risk of financial failure was minimized; with the technological improvements made chiefly by private industry at their disposal, state ventures had no need and little incentive to contribute to technical advances. The greatest contribution of state-financed mining and steel operations has been in the sociological field. Responsible to the public, and conscious of the hard-fought battles for better wages and more tolerable working conditions carried on by organized labor, the state shrewdly made the most of the economic and sociological *status quo*, and, starting where private industry left off, its industrial relations have been unimpaired by embittered memories of former strife.

On this historical basis it can be argued that organized labor and state enterprise have been the champions of higher living standards against private capitalism. But even if the argument be conceded, it does not explain the disparity in such standards in different industrial districts in many parts of the world, or the comparability of industrial and nonindustrial regions elsewhere. Upon analysis it becomes evident that economic and sociological battles have been won only in those areas where wealth has been and is being created, and hence where wealth is available for distribution. Our question, then, is whether metals contribute substantially to the wealth that makes high living standards possible; and if so, how.

The point which has been made for iron applies to all other metals: No nation is rich by virtue of the simple fact of possession, nor is

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the act of exploitation in itself of vital significance in determining standards of living. It is, however, the first step in the creation of new wealth, and to this extent the mining industries may be regarded as a cornerstone in the foundation of distributed wealth, which is the basis of good living. Over 90 per cent of the nations contribute to the world's stock of metallic raw materials, and, in a degree that is roughly proportional to volume times value of the metals mined, the mining industry makes its small contribution to national income and well-being.

The rising tide of nationalism in recent years has led many an uninformed politico to overestimate the economic value of mineral production, which makes it doubly important to see this value in proper perspective. The precious metals add directly to wealth in that they can be instantly converted into acceptable media of domestic and international exchange, with universally recognized though fluctuating exchange values. It is important to note that the increment added to national wealth is not the total value of the metal mined, but rather its value minus costs of production; yet the costs of production play a significant part in economic conditions, too. Although they utilize wealth already produced, the expenditure of this wealth accelerates the velocity of monetary circulation, and in this manner standards of living in countries that mine gold will improve both to the limits of the profit and taxes on the operation, and to the degree that money already in circulation changes hands at an accelerated velocity by participation in the mining operation.

In the case of the ferrous metals and alloys, as well as the base and light metals, mining produces ores that have low values in comparison with the prices of the refined metals obtained from them. Several processes, including especially the formidable expense of handling and long-distance transportation, may lie between the ore at the mine mouth and the marketable metal. Obviously, values increase and the velocity of expenditures is materially accelerated if any or all of the processes can be carried on in the country or area of origin, and there is too often a temptation on the part of the partisan politician to base judgments and to formulate restrictive legislation on political rather than economic considerations. Extraction and free movement of ores are being hampered by misguided efforts to retain processing

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operations that cannot be performed economically in the country of origin. In addition there are those extremists who advocate non-use of domestic metallic resources that cannot be processed within the country of origin, in preference to exploitation and shipment for use abroad.

The futility of conserving minerals for some hypothetical nationalistic advantage in the remote future is self-evident. The mining of metallic ores and the use of metals are geared to today's technology and to current demand. Tomorrow, one or both may change. It is thus as safe to gamble that a specific mineral deposit will have a lower value as it is to hope its worth will be enhanced twenty to a hundred years hence. Only one fact is certain: Unused resources contribute nothing to the standard of living; and unless known deposits are economically unavailable or are in excess of current needs, their non-use is likely to be a disservice to the people, both of the countries that own them and of the world that needs them.

The rate and conditions of exploitation of specific metallic deposits are matters of serious import. Mineral deposits are expendable, and, as mining proceeds, reserves approach zero as a limit. The rate of extraction must bear a direct relation to the size, form and accessibility of the deposit, and to a reasonable rate of amortization. From an economic-sociological viewpoint, however, other factors assume greater importance. Mining is a localized activity that may result in the concentration of thousands of people at a site which provides no other means of support. It would be difficult, for example, to imagine the 15,000 people at Sewell in Chile finding local employment when the copper ores of El Teniente are exhausted. Yet this property of the Braden Copper Company is finite, and within a calculable period of time there will be 15,000 displaced people seeking other employment in Chile. From the economic standpoint, however, there are optimum rates of mineral extraction below which production is obtained at a penalty to profits. From a business point of view, there is no advantage in accelerating production above the optimum, for this, too, is usually costly; it may also result in tonnage yields that exceed the capacity of mills and transportation facilities; and there is no sound reason or incentive to shorten the life of an operation by undue acceleration.

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Political considerations may at times conflict with the economic principles by which mining enterprises must be guided. In many countries governments collect royalties on production. Tonnage thus becomes a major concern, but of no less importance is the maintenance of production. A steady source of tax income and a dependable addendum to living standards are productive of economic and political stability, and what political group does not welcome both? It is the habit of governments, however, to increase expenditures to match income and, if political expediency warrants, to exceed income. It follows that, in many countries where state income has depended on the exploitation of resources, political pressure has been placed on mining companies to maintain, or even to increase, the level of production, commonly in the face of adverse economic conditions, growing competition, or depleted ore reserves. The catastrophic results may be analyzed in the case of Chile, where competition from synthetic nitrates and African copper combined with world-wide depression to wreck the country's prosperity and stability, which were founded on royalties and export taxes on these two raw materials.

A study of Chile's plight in the early thirties inevitably spotlights the significance of general economic conditions in the metal-mining industries. Mine output responds directly to the requirements of current consumption. Inventories may accumulate in the category of finished metal products, but rarely in ore or concentrates. The controversy that has raged over the question of stockpiling strategic ores is, in itself, a commentary on the unusual nature of accumulating surpluses. It follows, then, that mineral exploitation is a feast-or-famine industry—good while times are normal or booming, bad when the level of consumption is low. Obviously, this examination of metals in relation to the standard of living will not be complete without an examination of metal consumption.

The per capita consumption of metals has been used as a direct measure of living standards in the several nations of the world, but actually metal consumption per capita is a more accurate measure of the level of industrialization achieved than it is of the living standards affecting the mass of people. For the latter, food intake in calories is a more accurate measure. Yet neither metal nor food con-

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sumption is the diagnostic factor, but rather productivity. Metals affect living standards primarily as they enhance man's ability to produce. Since man's ability to produce is determined by several factors, it is essential not to overestimate the importance of metals.

The increased production of goods and of foods that has dominated economic history since the Industrial Revolution started in England has affected constantly expanding areas. Founded on the mass production of steel, the revolution became effective through the production of machines which, in turn, mass-produced consumer goods. Mass production involves substantial increase in output per worker with material decrease in cost per unit. Continued expansion of markets for machine-made goods depended initially on lowered prices but ultimately on increased purchasing power and sales pressure or, more politely, "education." The progress of the revolution would soon have been impeded had there not been correlative, if belated, improvements in the applications of energy to manufacturing and to transportation. Even so, manpower and food shortages were averted only through the mechanization of agriculture, which enabled fewer farmers to produce more food per acre on more acres.

As basic inventions have been integrated into the industrial economy, the latter has undergone refinements that have extended their influence to every corner of the earth. Ferrous metallurgists have enhanced the versatility of machines and other steel products by developing alloys that are especially adapted to every use. The collection of the alloying ingredients has brought many a remote region into the orbit of the steel economy. By producing alloying metals, at least fourteen nations play vital parts in the modern steel industry, even though most of them are unable to manufacture steel. The industry is also combing the earth for new reserves of iron ore, and the movement of this basic ingredient in steel has become international in scope. Except for deposits in France and the United States, the world's major sources of aluminum ore are situated in nonindustrial countries, imperfectly equipped to process the raw material. Magnesium is widely dispersed, with the salts of the ocean serving as one source of raw material, but production of the metal is localized near sites of abundant and cheap power for its operations. The base metals, lead and zinc, are more domesticated than most

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metallic raw materials, yet private capital has ventured deep into Australia and Yünnan, not to mention the remote Andes of northwestern Argentina, to mine rich deposits. Impending scarcities of both these metals promise to widen the search. Copper is sought in Chile, the Belgian Congo, and Northern Rhodesia. Tin has taken mining enterprises to southeastern Asia and to the bleak Altiplano of Bolivia, and now uranium and the other radioactive metals are drawing prospectors into equatorial Africa and to the Canadian Arctic.

The names of the metal-producing countries read like the roster of the United Nations. The list is more nearly complete when those nations that contribute agricultural, animal and forest products to the world economy are added. If lines of international trade are plotted, several facts become evident, and several conclusions are inevitable. Our industrial civilization is—and must be—oblivious of political boundaries, and our industrialists are the truest, if not the most altruistic, internationalists. Barriers to trade are political, and nationalism is inimical to the normal flow of goods and raw materials and, in the long run, to living standards, which depend upon the free movement of essential raw materials, machines and some consumer goods. Basically, there is no such thing as a well-rounded "national economy," even among those nations that nature has favored.

Again, however, the facts of geography and of international trade offer little encouragement to utopian ideologies. Economically, this is an international world, but not "One World." There are clearly defined industrial nuclei that dominate trading areas of varying sizes and importance. The nuclei are few in number, and some of them merge, or overlap, and compete on their peripheral trading margins. All the nuclei are localized around centers of maximum energy production, and the larger coal fields have consistently furnished industry with its energy requirements. The Appalachian-Eastern Interior fields of the United States, the Midlands of Britain, the Ruhr of western Germany, and the Donets and Kuznetsk basins of the USSR are the primary nuclei, with secondary centers in Silesia, Czechoslovakia, northeastern China and Manchuria, Karaganda, northeastern India, eastern Australia, and perhaps the Union of South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. Tertiary centers are growing around the more accessible sites of hydro-energy supply, but oil is

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too mobile to have localized major industries, though it is an auxiliary factor in southern California and the Gulf region of the United States, and in Transcaucasia in the Soviet Union.

It is mainly to the primary centers that the world's raw materials move; and, insofar as standards of living within the trading areas tributary to these nuclei depend upon the prosperity of the nuclei, international attention should be focused on the vital task of creating sound economies, unhampered by the artificial trade barriers imposed by political boundaries, politicians, and the spirit of nationalism, within these natural geographic regions.

Living standards are not the problem of the sociologists or of the lawmakers, though the former may diagnose social ills and the latter may protect social gains. The standards themselves are the by-products of sound and unhampered regional economies that recognize no political boundaries. Metals, as sources of new industrial wealth and as media for increased productivity, have made, and must still make, substantial contributions to living standards. As expendable resources, they must be exploited and used with discretion; but intensive exploration for new reserves, wise extraction, and judicious and ingenious use, can do as much to improve the economic status of the human race as any other major economic activity.

The mineral economist must humbly remember, however, that minerals comprise but one of the ingredients of a regional economy. Foods, fibers and forest products are of no less importance, and it follows that production of these raw materials must likewise be integrated into the economic pattern. Proper integration will inevitably create a characteristic regional form, in which political boundaries are incidental, and in which there is division of labor and free movement of raw materals and finished products. In such an economy, Danes can enjoy as high a standard of living in the dairy industry as Germans in the coal mines and steel mills; and both can share their living standards with Uruguayans in exchange for wool and meat, and with Sweden in exchange for Kiruna iron ore. If our diplomats would direct their energies toward the solution of the practical international problems of making a living for the people in natural regions, living standards would take care of themselves.

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Legend

Eve Triem

What came with me, then,
into the herb-heavy air after rain?
(The stems touched lightly,
the mothlight shaken from a darting shuttle.)

From pools, from raindrops in peonies,
a body-glimmer, a fabled face.
Rising from streams of sleep (someone I did not dream)
a figure carved from talk.

And Time had covered it,
as clouds will sink a moon,
but it will float, like grave-lamps it will glow.

Legends: Boy who became my father held the reins . . .
Or, whipping those moon-eyed horses, was it I,
afraid of the vague, veiled lady in the coach,
yet diligent to her look?

[*over*]

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Poppies of midnight by an open tomb,
the flung coin of payment shining in the rain—
shining there still?

Boy's terror winks like matches in the wind . . .
Not mine. But I know. Because there were no stars
(before the horses ran)
I touched a hand that tore the human cloth
and saw the lady naked in her death . . .

And *she* remembered.
What voyaging by acid thorn and stone
before she groped through water to my side,
the lightning like a coin upon her hand!

✪ EVE TRIEM'S poems have appeared in *Poetry*, the *Yale Review*, the New York *Times*, *Voices*, the *Tiger's Eye*, the *Quarterly Review of Literature* and THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. Her first book of poems was *Parade of Doves*.

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The Shock of Aging

Martin Gumpert

THERE are several stages through which almost every patient has to pass: he must become aware of his infirmity; he must—within the frame of his knowledge—diagnose his infirmity; he must call upon and accept medical help; and, finally, he must adapt his life to his ailment. In this process, the part of the physician is small. In fact, the course of a disease depends far more on the attitude of the patient toward himself than on medical interference.

In the transformation of a healthy person into a patient, the first step is the most vital one: his own recognition of his illness. This metamorphosis from the state of health to the state of sickness remains an unsolved medical phenomenon. What makes us feel sick? The pain and the disability and the disfigurement of disease are, of course, important. However, they may be present without their victim's being aware of being sick. Then, there are many patients, many sufferers, who feel seriously ill without the objective evidence of disease. It would be wrong to assume that either of these groups is at fault. A temporary physical disturbance—even if it causes severe symptoms—does not necessarily constitute sickness, and, on the other hand, an ill-defined unrest in an apparently healthy person is often the first sign of serious pathology. The *realization* of disease is something quite different from the pathological state of disease, and more important than disease for the individual patient.

This mysterious step from well-being to ill-feeling, this threshold which we have to pass in the process of becoming a patient (and about which we know so little) exists for acute and chronic ailments alike. Whether we suffer from a pimple on the nose, from an

✪ A practicing physician, specializing in geriatrics, MARTIN GUMPERT is the author of books of scientific interest, and of novels and poetry. Another of Dr. Gumpert's articles appeared in the Summer, 1949, number of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

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attack of common cold, or from the dramatic experience of a coronary thrombosis—in every case there is the critical point at which we apprehend that we are no longer in good health, that some change has befallen us. This applies not only to physical ailments in the strictest sense, but to all changes which throw our life out of its momentous balance, and demand the effort of new adaptation. Now it seems that disturbance of our vital balance rarely occurs in a gradual, premeditated, foreseeable manner. A chronic ailment may develop with extreme slowness, and take many years from its hidden onset to the outbreak of acute symptoms. However, to the patient it will almost always come as a surprise, a sudden attack. The person who realizes for the first time that something is wrong with him, or decidedly different from what it used to be, suffers a *shock*. The recognition of aging is perhaps the most profound shock of our life span—next to dying.

The highlights of an average individual life span are amazingly uniform. There is birth, school, graduation, the first job, the first love, marriage, becoming a parent, losing one's parents or beloved, losing one's job, becoming dependent, dying. This—with some human variations—is the cradle-to-grave story of all living beings. One of these human variations is a violent fear of death, a constant flight from the reality of death, the preliminaries of which are suppressed and only reluctantly accepted when there is no way of ignoring them any longer. This at least is the usual reaction. The integration into life, the acceptance of aging and death as the inevitable end of human existence, is only seldom achieved. Even a temporary loss of security, of orientation, of the accustomed physical and mental routine, an unexpected fall or break, causes anxiety, panic and shock, because something happens that reminds us of death.

It is a basic phenomenon of aging that, as one grows older, fewer and fewer things are done for the first time, and more and more things are done for the last time. Both of these developments can be favorable or unfavorable. The loss of some function can have the effect of a blessing or of an unbearable loss, and the acquisition of new experience can become an unpleasant burden or a delight. Everything that is new, and has not been heretofore experienced, seems to the average person frightening, incomprehensible, even irrational,

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however rational it may be objectively. You all probably are familiar with the reaction of the average patient who—informed of the presence of some serious disease—will vigorously object: "But, Doctor, I never had anything like that before." Most people are not able to perceive the end or the beginning of a new life situation. Especially are pleasurable states often recognized only in their absence or loss—not in their beginnings. Happiness is to most people something that can be reconstructed only from past emotions and memories, in contrast to present unhappiness. The same is the case with health and youth. Man seems to be obsessed by an urge to escape changes of forms, of patterns, of values—probably because every change brings him nearer to death. This tendency to preserve the *status quo,* to conserve the limited resources we have, finds mighty allies in the moral and economic concepts of our society.

However, there can be no doubt that the overcoming of an exaggerated concept of security—a dogged clinging to stability and accustomed habit—is good, and that intellectual curiosity and independence, a well-cultivated faculty of giving up the old and assimilating the new, create the best safeguard against the critical shock of aging, and contain, therefore, the best prescription for a long and successful life.

The *shock*-experience of change is "unhealthy" in the extreme; it is the main source of human unhappiness, and unhappiness equals disease. The shock of change has for many people almost the force of a metaphysical revelation, though it is really, most of the time, nothing but the necessary mental acknowledgement of a physical fact. The afflicted person is simply the last to know about it. It is a great disservice to help people keep their illusions alive. The eventual inescapable shock will only be the greater. The early and radical destruction of the patient's illusions about himself is, we believe, one of the essential duties of a good physician, for the final defeat of a patient who has long been fed with the placebo of illusions is sometimes disastrous beyond any help or hope. The mechanism of shock, which is today so widely used in psychiatric treatment, may be a natural, if forceful, way of correcting emotional and physical disturbances, but it would be far better to escape the reaction of shock, which is always a violent rebellion against the sacred order of the

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body. Educational and medical methods should be developed to uncover and to identify mental and physical changes in patients at their earliest onset, to understand them, to treat them, or to have them accepted.

In this short discussion, the processes of aging and of disease have been treated almost as if they were identical. They are not, of course. However, the shock of aging is often induced by disease, or at least by some sort of physical failure. Such symptoms may be as minor as having a young person offer you his seat in the bus, or as serious as a threat to your marriage, your job, your social dignity. In any such event, the actual nature of the disturbance is quite unimportant. What *is* decisive is whether the patient is able or unable to accept it. This, first of all, and more than anything else, will determine the course and the outcome of the disorder. The doctor—together with his drugs and instruments—must try to help the patient to a better realization of his situation; he must reveal weak spots and deficiencies; he must evaluate the patient's assets, and prevent—by guidance and instruction—the incident of shock, of breakdown, of sudden failure. Sometimes this is a most difficult job.

We all know the patient who comes to our office for a routine check-up, a busy, active, vigorous man, full of schemes and plans. We find an extreme hypertension, disturbance of breathing, an enlarged heart with myocardial defects, a damaged kidney or a suspect prostatic gland. We cannot help revealing to him that this is not an ordinary check-up, that further studies will be necessary, that some changes of his daily routine may be required. He, of course, has sensed all the time that something was wrong with him. The medical corroboration of his hidden fear is likely to produce an acute shock. A dramatic change of his whole personality takes place before our eyes: the active, self-confident man shrinks into a dependent, destitute invalid; he gives up within minutes the frame, the aims and achievements of a lifetime, in a sudden and, of course, unwarranted convulsion of fear. Or his shock reaction ends in quiet despair, often together with a stubborn resistance to therapy or any other kind of active defense. He insists that he can afford to die—because insurance has provided for his loss of life—but that he cannot afford to give up any of his duties, labors or pleasures. He has the genuine

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experience of a terrible and unexpected catastrophe: now I know I am old, I am done for, this is the end.

The shock of aging is a psychological artefact, created by our traditional negative attitudes toward change in general, and specifically toward the changes of aging and dying. Medicine, to be sure, has no cure for age or death, for medicine cannot cure disease—with rare exceptions. But, on the other hand, we can today safely state that the concept of "hopeless" disease does no longer exist for us. Most sickness can be stalled or lessened or controlled. To reconcile the patient to his disease is perhaps the modern physician's most constructive job, and the essence of the art of healing.

A patient comes to us in great distress. He is eighty-four years old, a painter of reputation, suffering from a not too far advanced Parkinsonism. He sees us without the knowledge of his relatives, one nephew being a well-known physician who has repeatedly told him that nothing can be done about his senile ailment. He feels humiliated, frustrated and despondent, because of his staggering gait and his trembling hands which force him to give up painting. I explain to him that his nephew is right in regard to the bad prospect for a recovery from his ailment. However, I prove to him that in spite of his tremor he is still able to use his hands intelligently. I show him pictures by the famous German painter Louis Corinth, who, after he had suffered paralysis from stroke, created his most important paintings, visibly marked by his physical disability but strengthened in their artistic passion and power. I talk about other painters who have turned physical liabilities into assets, and I advise him to accept his trembling hands rather as an interesting and stimulating variation from the norm, than as an incurably incapacitating ailment. The momentous change of the patient's mood, followed by a complete emotional and physical readjustment, is surprising.

The case of a very well-known university professor should be mentioned here. Until recently, he was burdened with a tremendous load of responsibilities, involving great physical strain. He suffered a mild heart attack, gave up his teaching job, and retired from the majority of his social and professional functions into an idyllic retreat, but not without committing himself to writing a handbook of eight volumes on his main subject of research. This ingenious pre-

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scription of extreme relaxation mixed with incessant participation in life, this wisely concocted medicine, will offer him every chance for the long continuation of a successful and enjoyable life.

It may not be easy to transfer to the average patient the emotional response to aging of so erudite and wise an individual. However, a better understanding of the mechanism of the "shock of aging" and its treatment, and most of all, its prevention, will be rewarding for the practicing physician.

A recent long term statistic by Dr. Hollis E. Clow, of hundreds of aged patients suffering from mental disturbances, has shown how extremely successful the therapeutic approach can be in even so apparently hopeless a field. The acceptance of changes like aging or like disease can undoubtedly be modified by a number of external and internal factors.

Recent psychological tests (Rorschach and Szondi) by Dr. Molly Harrower have shown the surprising fact that concern and anxiety over bodily functions is about eleven times greater among emotionally disturbed neurotics, and more than three times greater among normals, than among patients suffering from chronic ailments like multiple sclerosis, poliomyelitis or Parkinsonism. A further striking result of these studies is the difference in the acceptance of dependency needs, which is about three times better, for instance, in the multiple sclerosis group than in the emotionally disturbed group.

It may be that in this particular illness specific nervous changes alter the emotional reaction to disease. However, it seems to us that the chronically ill or the slowly changing—i.e., the aging-personality —is able to produce, as a measure of natural defense, an almost perfect acceptance of change, a reconciliation with unchangeable facts, and an ability to use and to enjoy remaining resources. To destroy such acceptance would be a medical crime. To confirm and to deepen it constitute a highly important and constructive medical procedure.

The "shock of aging" is a phenomenon familiar in fiction. And every one of us who is past a certain number of years will be aware of some shock of this kind which he personally has suffered. By transferring such experience to the realm of scientific study, we may be able to develop a useful therapeutic instrument in our fight against the pathological aspects of the aging process.

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Macaulay and the Trimmers

William G. Carleton

MACAULAY'S *History of England* has come to be tagged neatly as *Whig* history. Historians and laymen alike have fallen into this stereotype when speaking of Macaulay. This Whig label applied to Macaulay's historical work is due in the main to four considerations: his known partisan activities as a Whig politician; his avowed sympathy for middle-class ideals; his admiration for the Revolution of 1688, which is regarded erroneously as a Whig revolution; and the too-clear quality, the tone of finality, in his literary style.

Macaulay's style, with all its clarity, has done much to encourage a deceptive view of his content. Readers are apt to think that because his style bears the air of certainty, his philosophy necessarily must be partisan. Now while his rhetoric is emphatic, his philosophy actually is relativist. And while he admires leaders who take positive stands and who state those stands positively, he also expects those leaders to alter their positions with changing circumstances. In times of tyranny, he likes men who proclaim freedom; in times of popular unheaval, he likes men who affirm law and order. His sense of revolution is conservative, and there is much of the spirit of Burke in him.

Macaulay's so-called Whig prejudices, so far as they influence his historical judgments, are greatly exaggerated. The Whigs actually come off worse than one has been led to expect, and conversely the Tories come off better. The Revolution of 1688 and the Revolutionary Settlement, not the Whigs, are the central themes of the *History*. Macaulay is an apologist for the Revolution, and it is well to remember that both Tories and Whigs made that Revolution possible. To preserve the Revolution required a nice and constant moderation, and with this in view, Macaulay becomes a defender of the middle-roaders, the trimmers, whose cautious policies protected the

✪ WILLIAM G. CARLETON is professor of political science at the University of Florida and chairman of the social sciences in the University College. One of his articles appeared in the Winter, 1946-47, number of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

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Revolution and made impossible a counter-revolution. If there is extreme partisanship in Macaulay, it is the partisanship of English nationalism, not of Whiggery.

Now there is no denying that Macaulay was a Whig. As a politician, as a member of the House of Commons, and as a public office-holder, he was a strict party man. In his political speeches and public utterances, he was intensely loyal to the party line, on occasion against his better judgment. More, many of his personal letters during his period of active political participation were partisan in the extreme. Also, there is some evidence to warrant a conclusion that Macaulay was more partisan in his earlier writings, and at the very beginning of the first volume of his *History*, than he was later. In his essay on Hallam, published in 1828, he took a critical view of Halifax, a view he would not have accepted in his more mature years. In the early part of his *History*, he failed somewhat to give Laud and Strafford substantial historical justice. But as Macaulay got deeper into his *History*, and as he receded, in his own political and personal life, from the exciting Radical days of the early 1830's, his objectivity and his inclination for the political middle of the road increased. Moreover, Macaulay neglected the misery brought to large portions of the English peasantry by the enclosure movement, which the Glorious Revolution speeded up. (However, Macaulay was more a political than a social historian, and much of this evidence on agrarian conditions has been unearthed since his time.)

Herbert Butterfield, in his suggestive *The Whig Interpretation of History*, maintains that the "Whig" historian is one who studies the past with special reference to the present, who praises revolutions provided they have prevailed, who writes history largely as a justification and ratification of what has been successful in the past. Now in this comprehensive sense, Macaulay, of course, was a "Whig" historian, as are most historians today. (Virtually every American historian is a "Whig" historian in Butterfield's large sense of the term.) Also, there is no denying that Macaulay's historical sympathies were strongly enlisted in support of limited and constitutional government, parliamentary and cabinet government, the extension of civil liberties, the expansion of religious toleration, the broadening of intellectual freedom, the curbing of mercantilistic restrictions, the

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elimination of trading barriers, the widening of free trade. Since the rising middle class was an exponent of many of these policies, Macaulay in a sense may be said to be an apologist of that class. And since the Whig party was frequently an advocate of many of these policies, Macaulay, in his role of historian, often appears friendly to that party. But this is about as far as Macaulay went in writing history from the Whig point of view.

In another part of his penetrating essay, Butterfield defines the Whig historian more narrowly as one apt to imagine the British constitution as coming down to us by virtue of the work of long generations of Whigs, and in spite of the obstructions of a long line of tyrants and Tories. Now in the main, Macaulay's *History* does *not* conform to this definition of the Whig historian. Macaulay reveals the British constitution as in reality the result of the perpetual collision and continual interplay of both Tories and Whigs, a synthesis best illustrated in any given historical period by the political trimmer, who in his own personal career blends the soundest attitudes of both parties. Those who assume that Macaulay was the historical apologist of the Whig party *as such* go entirely too far, and the record will not bear them out.

II

The chief interest of Macaulay's *History* is the Revolution of 1688. That Revolution is pictured as a great, decisive, defensive act which saved England from tyranny, prevented the forcible restoration of Catholicism in a land peopled by an overwhelming majority of Protestants, and preserved the independence of the English nation by ousting a monarch who had become a mere subaltern of Louis XIV— a monarch who would have made England a satrapy of the French King. To be sure, important incidental accomplishments resulted from the Revolution: the broadening of civil liberties; the securing of the freedom of unlicensed printing; the purification of the administration of justice in political cases, with the securing of life tenure for judges, and with the passage of the law regulating trials in cases of treason; the Toleration Act; the settlement of the Presbyterian Kirk in Scotland; the alteration in the mode of granting supplies, and the establishment of the rule that all the expenses of army,

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navy and ordnance should be brought annually under the review of the House of Commons; the gradual development of parliamentary and cabinet government. However, the supreme achievements of the Revolution of 1688 were not these forward-looking by-products. The supreme achievements were defensive—the overthrow of intolerable wrongs: tyranny, Catholicism by arbitrary edict, and French domination. To preserve the Revolution, to forestall a counter-revolution, to prevent a return of pre-Revolutionary dangers —these were the paramount considerations to which all others would have to yield.

A counter-revolution was to be avoided at all cost. Successful counter-revolution meant despotism, the triumph of Irish and French Papists, the conquest of England by France. The test of every measure, at home and abroad, was its capacity to resist counter-revolution. The very salvation of England was at stake, as it had been at the time of the Spanish Armada, as it later was to be in Napoleon's time. Nonjurors and Jacobites were no mere opponents of a British government; they were saboteurs, fifth-columnists, traitors—supreme public enemies who plotted the destruction of their country. In defending the Revolution, Macaulay thought of himself as defending England. He was reflecting the glow of intense English patriotism, just as he had done with his eulogy of Chatham, just as he was to do later when he wrote his criticism of the Younger Pitt for being a poor war minister in the face of the supreme threat from Napoleon. William's war against James and Louis was a Holy War—like Elizabeth's war against Philip II, and Burke's war against Bonaparte.

In his *History*, then, Macaulay is concerned with party politics and politicians as these affect England's very fight for survival, a survival inseparable from the inviolability of the Revolutionary Settlement of 1688-1689. To read all this as mere Whig dogma is to underestimate Macaulay, misjudge the majority of English Tories of that day, and belittle the breadth and significance of the Revolutionary Settlement.

III

Macaulay treats with fairness, even with sympathy, those Tories who cooperated to make the Revolution possible, and who adhered

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to the Revolutionary Settlement. Loyalty to the Revolution is always the touchstone of appraisal. Positions taken on other questions —the Toleration Act, the Mutiny Act, the law regulating treason trials, the liberty of unlicensed printing, the Triennial Bill, the Place Bill, the recoinage, the East India Company, the funding of the national debt, the Land Bank, the Bank of England—are all strictly subordinate to the question of loyalty to King William and to the Revolutionary Settlement. Tories essentially loyal to that Settlement—Tories like Nottingham and Danby and Seymour—come off well in spite of their occasional waverings. Indeed, they come off better than Whigs essentially loyal to that Settlement—Whigs like Sunderland and Shrewsbury—who on occasion also wavered.

It was Macaulay's intention to carry his *History* through the death of Queen Anne, to the Hanoverian Succession. Considering this aim, it is rather surprising that he does not build up the men who later are to be the Whig mainstays and the Whig heroes of Anne's reign—Godolphin, Marlborough, Shrewsbury. But he does not. If anything, he is hard on all three of them. Godolphin is pictured as a time-server, Marlborough as completely avaricious and mean, Shrewsbury as pusillanimous, even poltroonish. Leslie Stephen has pointed out that Macaulay was fond of representing a man as a bundle of contradictions, because this enabled him to obtain striking contrasts, and indeed it may have been Macaulay's purpose to depict the future Whig leaders in an unfavorable light in William's reign, the better to make heroes of them in Anne's reign. However, this is highly conjectural, and the fact remains that these future Whig heroes are drawn in a most ignoble way.

The real villains of Macaulay's piece are the extremists of right and left, those on the right who refused to accept the Revolutionary Settlement, and those on the left who would go so far toward Dissent, latitudinarianism, restricted monarchy, and even republicanism as to jeopardize the Revolutionary Settlement. The villains of the right are the Nonjurors and the Jacobites, open and secret. The villains of the left are the old unreconstructed Roundheads, the diehards of Popish Plot days, Shaftesbury's brisk boys, the intransigents of Country Party and Green Ribbon times who continued into the post-Revolutionary period their hostility to the monarchy, and

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who saw no difference between a King Charles II and a King William III—men like Titus Oates, Jack Howe, Paul Foley, Charles Lord Spencer, John Hampden II, William Sacheverell, and the younger John Trenchard. And as so often happens in politics, left and right frequently worked together in common opposition to the center—in this case the Revolutionary center—and this was a fact Macaulay never forgot.

IV

Macaulay's *History*, then, becomes a classic defense of the middle of the road. Make progress, as much as practicable, within the framework of the Revolutionary Settlement, but never do anything to jeopardize that Settlement. The Glorious Revolution was a conservative Revolution. It was a cooperative Revolution. It was a Whig-Tory Revolution. It was a Revolution by "concurrent majorities." In the period of transition, that nice balance of joint consent must never be upset. There must be no taint of Cromwellian excess, for Cromwellian excess would lead only to counter-revolution and reaction. Beware, then, of reprisals, pains, penalities and forfeitures. Limit the monarchy, yes, by refusing grants for life and restricting appropriations to fixed periods; but do not cripple the executive's power to take effective measures for saving the Revolution and England. Expand religious toleration where possible, but if the crisis of the times and the state of English opinion make this practicable only for Protestant Dissenters and not Catholic Dissenters, then do not press on doctrinaire grounds for total toleration. Sanction wider latitudinarianism within the Anglican Church, yes, but take care that it does not go beyond the bounds of public opinion; take care that it is limited, slow, gradual, and by Church action rather than by political action. The moderate middle course of a Tillotson is preferable to the pious obscurantism of a Sancroft or the eager evangelism of a Burnet, that "Jack Presbyter in lawn sleeves." And in general take as the first guide of political conduct the safeguarding against current and real dangers, not the avenging of past wrongs or the prescribing against imaginary future dangers.

Long before he wrote his great *History*, Macaulay had set down in writing his middle-of-the-road approach to historical progress, his

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essential belief that we make haste slowly. In his essay on the great John Hampden of ship-money fame, Macaulay deplored the untimely death of Hampden as removing the one outstanding personality in the Roundhead party capable of restraining the excesses of the Puritan Revolution. More important, in his essay on Sir James Mackintosh's *History of the Revolution in England*, Macaulay poured his contempt on those historians who would have opposed the Great Charter because it did not reform the Church; who would have opposed the Reformation because it did not limit the kingly prerogative; who would have opposed the Revolution of 1688 because it did not purify the House of Commons; and the Toleration Act because it did not go the whole length of Catholic Emancipation. In contrast, Macaulay observed that practical men who are pressing forward in pursuit of truth are grateful to everyone who has cleared so much as an inch of the way for them. (The more he matured, and the farther removed he became from the exciting Radical days of the early 1830's, the more successfully did Macaulay apply this middle-of-the-road interpretation of history).

Holding, therefore, to a kind of golden mean in historical interpretation, it is not surprising that Macaulay singles out Halifax, that Prince of Trimmers, for especial praise. Halifax is described as having taken almost invariably the moderate view of the great questions of his time; as having in crisis after crisis stood against extremism; as having pleaded mercy for Roman Catholics in the days of the Popish Plot and for Exclusionists in the days of the Rye House Plot; as having done all in his power to save the head of Stafford and that of Russell; as having championed order in the days of seditious turbulence, and liberty in the days of tyranny.

However, the first hero of the *History* is not Halifax. The first hero of the *History* is another consummate trimmer, not self-confessed to be sure, but the most effective trimmer of them all—King William himself. Without doubt William III is *the* hero of Macaulay's *History*. And how admirably he fulfills Macaulay's conception of the cautious post-Revolutionary statesman bent on preserving the Revolutionary Settlement! William treads warily the middle path. He placates here, urges moderation there; he is sensitive to any changes of attitude in public men, and usually finds opportunities

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to bind wavering and lukewarm supporters more closely to him; he has his ear to the ground for every shift in public opinion, and sedulously follows the election returns, now calling to his ministry a few more Whigs, now a few more Tories. Certainly the permanence of the Revolutionary Settlement owes not a little to the quiet caution, the disciplined moderation, the practical good sense, and the adroit trimmer qualities of William of Orange.

V

But what of the Whig Junto? Does not Macaulay show great partiality for those extraordinary statesmen, and their great ministry which guided England through those formative and supremely critical years of the middle 1690's? Macaulay does give great emphasis to the work of the Junto. But as an honest historian, as an historian whose task it is to give meaning and understanding to the development of national institutions, how could he do otherwise? Certainly that parliamentary combination which was experimenting with cabinet government and giving England her new East India Company, her recoinage, her funded national debt, and her Bank of England, is worthy of the weightiest attention by any English historian.

But those who say that Macaulay shows great partiality to the unusual men who led the Junto speak without knowledge of the *History*. True, John Somers is eulogized. Macaulay's treatment of him is romantic, soft. And sources not available to Macaulay, sources uncovered since his time, throw some doubt on the lofty, disinterested nature of Somers' patriotism, so glowingly affirmed by the *History*.

However, the other members of the Junto are treated more critically, some even harshly. The remarkable talents of Charles Montague are given their due—his lively intelligence and political imagination, his creativity in the field of finance, his superb conduct in parliamentary debate, his dash and verve and boldness. (In this connection, although it never would have occurred to Macaulay to introduce an American statesman, one is reminded of the striking likeness between Montague and Alexander Hamilton, not only in personal traits, but in qualities of political and financial leadership. Those American historians and biographers who are still struck by the "originality" of the Hamiltonian financial program, Richard Hof-

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stadter among the most recent, might well look a little more deeply into the life and work of Charles Montague.) Still, at no time does Macaulay gloss over Montague's great weaknesses—his vanity and strut, his arrogance and insolence, his avarice and extravagance, his low sense of public morality and his willingness to enrich himself out of the public treasury—traits which Macaulay contrasts unfavorably with the high personal integrity of the Younger Pitt.

The other members of the Junto come off far less favorably. Edward Russell is described as "emphatically a bad man, insolent, malignant, greedy, faithless." And Thomas Wharton, the last of the famous foursome, is depicted as the most narrow of partisans, as a ruthless political boss, as an electioneering corruptionist, as an evil tempter of youth, as a liar, a rake and a pimp. Macaulay quotes the Tory Jonathan Swift on Wharton: "He was the most universal villain I ever knew."

Macaulay, then, is no mere defender of the Whigs. Instead, he is the defender of the Revolution and the Revolutionary Settlement, of the wise middle of the roaders, both Tory and Whig, whose cautious moderation preserved the Revolutionary Settlement from the reaction of the right and from the impracticality of the left.

VI

To what extent was Macaulay's interpretation of the events covered by his *History* influenced by the political conditions of his own time, and by his personal reactions to those conditions? Walter Bagehot claims that in writing his *History*, Macaulay was still the public man of the 1830's, still the ardent Whig of 1832, full of the reformist outlook of those fruitful years. "He came into public life at an exciting season, he shared, of course, in that excitement, and the same excitement still quivers in his mind." Robert Livingston Schuyler of Columbia University, writing recently, is inclined to agree with Bagehot that Macaulay was always a Whig of 1832, and that he carried that Whiggery into his *History*.

Now it is well to remember that Macaulay wrote his great *History* in the 1840's, not in the 1830's. At the time he wrote, England was in a more conservative period, and large segments of the Whig party had cooled perceptibly to the reforms and warm humanitarianism of

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the early 1830's. The Whigs were now fighting the battle for free trade, for laissez-faire, and more and more identifying human welfare with the freedom of the business community. Advanced Tories and the bulk of the Whigs, in another great cooperative effort involving concurrent majorities, had carried, in 1846, the repeal of the protective tariff duties known as the Corn Laws. Most Whigs agreed with Lord John Russell that the extension of the franchise provided by the Reform Bill of 1832 was "final," and set their faces against Chartism and any further extension of a democratic suffrage.

Macaulay, too, was no longer the Radical he had been in 1832. That "excitement" no longer "quivered" in his brain. He, too, had changed with the times and with his party. The Revolution of 1832 needed to be assimilated and preserved. A too rapid movement toward numerical democracy would jeopardize the Revolutionary Settlement of 1832. Only conservative revolutions succeeded; radical revolutions aiming at pure democracy led only to chaos and tyranny. The true path was the moderate path of caution and gradualism.

In August of 1844, Macaulay deliberately postponed a visit to his Edinburgh constituency for fear that he might have to attend a ceremony honoring long-dead republicans. In July of 1847, Macaulay was defeated for re-election to his House of Commons seat, in part because of his opposition to Chartism. Radicalism was still strong in Edinburgh, and Macaulay no longer suited the Radical temper. Over and again Macaulay inveighed against the Revolutions of 1848 and pointed out their destructive consequences. They were, he thought, leading inevitably either to the destruction of civilization or to despotism. Later, in a series of letters to H. S. Randall, he frankly confessed his distaste for Jefferson and viewed Jacksonian democracy in America as leading ultimately to "fatal effects."

The Revolutionary Settlement of 1832, then, like the Revolutionary Settlement of 1688, was good; but, like the Settlement of 1688, it would require time for its firm establishment. Meanwhile, it must be defended from the extremists of the right and of the left, whether Tory or Whig. Assimilation of the new and the old, real acceptance, true security, would come by following the middle road, the path of caution and moderation; by adhering to the golden mean; by hearkening to the wisdom of the political trimmer.

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Portrait . . .

ALBERT SCHWEITZER

Emory Ross

ALBERT Schweitzer was in the United States on his first visit for exactly twenty-three days—June 28 to July 22, 1949. On each of those days, from one to more than a dozen persons must have asked him how Reverence for Life, for all life, (a) was to be reconciled with human need for food, health, protection; and (b) how it was to be put into daily, personal practice. There were hundreds of other questions besides—on organ building, organ playing, on medicine, on theology, philosophy, diet, mental ailments, literature, politics.

On politics he was usually silent, but each of his other answers was tailored, shaped to the occasion, to the conversation or incidents preceding, to the personality involved and its need. Nearly every answer was in quite simple language, French or German, and was practical, suggestive of action. Each was different, rather like a key designed to pass a single lock, to open a single door.

But as these single keys appeared and continued, day after day, one had the feeling of seeing a sort of unfolding master-keying process in operation. The individual answers, like Yale keys, all had certain points and heights and channels in them. The points varied, but all were action points. The heights differed, but all were in the realm of the spirit. The channels were, every one, channels of life, all life.

The attempt seems possible, perhaps, to put these answers side by side and, aided by other and longer conversations, correspondence and reading, to contrive a fair sort of master-key pass to some of the doors within the Schweitzer housing: what is this Schweitzer *man*, with room for music, for medicine, theology, philosophy, for many other things?

The first element of such an answer must be, I think, that Schweitzer is action, almost incredibly continuous and powerful, precise, very unusual action. This alone could not be the basis for a satisfying answer. Actionists have been found in every generation, and in ours they seem to abound. But the point here is the combination. Seldom, if ever, has such continuously powered and precise action been creatively linked with four so well-mastered disciplines, and the whole combined so visibly with practical spiritual values and works among all kinds of people, day by day, for three-fourths of a century.

That linkage and combination, that accumulative power not only produces pro-

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EMORY ROSS was for twenty-two years a missionary in Africa and is now secretary of the Africa Committee of the Foreign Missions Conference, chairman of the Committee for African Students in North America, and treasurer of the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship.

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digiously; it catches the imagination, lifts the sights. It sets goals. Men everywhere strive for goals, goals of the mind, of the spirit, of the soul. And since Schweitzer's considerable intellectual attainments are always quite visibly linked with spiritual, soul-satisfying actions—not only without damage to either, but seemingly to the high advantage of both—Schweitzer, for many people, sets challenging and inspiring goals.

To some he even becomes an ideal, which he certainly is not. He will fight that idea at the drop of the word, not only because he is modest, but because his genuine modesty comes directly out of his intellectual and spiritual realism and precision: he knows, with all his reverence for life, that no life on this earth can be perfect and ideal; he knows his own weaknesses and shortcomings, perhaps better than any one else. There is no gratulatory gloss within him. He is a realist and precisionist in this also. He is modest about himself, but sure about his ideas. He communicates to others his firm belief that they may, if they will, be able to live out his ideas, or sections of them, more fruitfully than he does himself. His very modesty seems quite unassailable because it thus grows clean and unencumbered out of his intellectual-spiritual, precision-action processes, and he seeks so genuinely to communicate it and them so freely to others. As William Penn said, "Sense shines with a double luster when set in humility."

Within himself the strong action element was evidently present early in life. He had a good family and a good mind, but Alsace has for generations had many such. There was, and is, nothing special about the little town of his birth (January 14, 1875), Kaysersberg, to account for an Albert Schweitzer. One of its future glories, indeed, will be the Parc Albert Schweitzer which the mayor told me in 1948 would presently be dedicated to its most widely known son. And eighteen kilometers to the southwest is another little Vosges valley village of Günsbach which has been Schweitzer's home since the age of six months. Through it flow the musical swift waters of the Fecht from Munster, five kilometers upstream, on toward Colmar, fifteen kilometers east, whence the Rhine is but another seventeen kilometers.

It is a sturdy and appealing country. So are its people. Auguste Bartholdi was born in 1834 in Colmar, and the museum which was his home has a model of his Statue of Liberty and of scores of others. It was he who did the statue in Colmar of Admiral Armand-Joseph Bruat, on the pedestal of which was the head of the African youth that had early attracted the young Schweitzer's thoughts. Eugene Debs, pioneer socialist in America, of another Colmar family, was a maternal cousin of Schweitzer. Charles Münch, who this winter succeeds Serge Koussevitsky as conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, is related by marriage. Jean-Paul Sartre is another cousin.

It was a diverse family, from a productive community. Schweitzer had a good start after an initial sickly few months. He had a big, strong body, a good home, and good associations, beginning with parents and relatives. He was, and is, rooted in the soil; he loves to work in it with his two hands. He gives the impression of drawing a sustenance directly from the earth. But clearly he draws it also from all living things, from all life past and present with which he establishes contact—and likewise from sun, moon and stars. One has the feeling with Schweitzer, more than with any other of whom I know, that he takes grist from anywhere, from almost everywhere, submits it to an inner chain-action process of unusual power *and* precision, and turns it out in a stream of extraordinary helpfulness and diversity.

The power for concentration, for controlling the use of time, for sometimes separating the body and mind, and for driving the two, whether separately or together, to selected tasks, came in youth, but only by major effort. For he was long a day-dreaming boy who learned to read and write readily enough, but very easily gave himself over to rather aimless mind wandering.

Bit by bit, however, he began what became the life-long process of taking the simplest, especially the simplest, happenings and observations of each day and ceaselessly,

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discriminatingly working them over into a life, a philosophy, a pattern of action.

A fascinating little bee alighted on his wee hand when he was still in petticoats at Günsbach. Stung unexpectedly and painfully, he screamed. His nurse and all the household surrounded him, exclaiming, kissing, comforting. The pain subsided, his screams kept up—he was enjoying the attention. But for the first time in his life he later that day felt ashamed of himself, like "a little rogue. . . . How often in after life, when assailed by temptation, has this experience warned me against exaggerating, or making too much of, whatever has happened to me!"

There was no Jew living then in Günsbach, but one from a nearby village would come through in his donkey cart. The older boys ran after him to jeer. The younger Schweitzer didn't understand the jeering at all, but one day, to make clear to the world that he had grown up, he joined, ran, jeered. Mausche gave no response but an embarrassed, good-natured smile—a "smile that overpowered me . . . which even today compels me to be patient when I should like to rage and storm."

At the end of Lent, when Schweitzer was seven or eight, a young friend urged that they take their new sling-shots out to shoot birds—a terrible proposal to Schweitzer, but one he feared to refuse lest Henry laugh at him. Just as they were adjusting their stones to aim at the brightly-singing birds the church bell rang—a voice from heaven for young Albert, who shouted, shooed the birds away to safety, and ran home. "Ever since then, when the Passiontide bells ring out . . . I reflect with a rush of grateful emotion how on that day their music drove deep into my heart the commandment: 'Thou shalt not kill' . . . the great experience of my childhood and youth. By the side of that all others are insignificant."

He gives evidence still, at 75, of seizing this grist of daily, simple experiences, taking it in, working at it ceaselessly and precisely with mind and heart, smelting, refining and forming it into simple, usable material for life—life which *is* Schweitzer and which seems so attractive, even glamorous to many who view the product. They can scarcely glimpse how simple such life can be, provided only that one's heart is developed closely with one's mind, both under inner Christian discipline and both committed to action.

Fulton Oursler was breakfasting with Schweitzer in New York, getting material for the article printed in the October *Reader's Digest*. The theme was how Reverence for Life could be put into practice in daily life. Conversation was in the simplest language of action. Man should forgive wrongs against himself, yes. Before the wrong-doer asked forgiveness? Certainly, replied Schweitzer, and cheerfully, freely, without grudging or reservations—just sweep it out clean, and again and again if required. That's the only way a man can live at peace within himself, and have room free within for enjoyment and growth. He remembered a fortnight before, in New York's Pennsylvania Station. He was waiting with Mrs. Schweitzer and their small party of friends to board the train for Aspen, Colorado. The usual crowds were milling before the gates. It was the first American railway station he had ever entered. There must have been a thousand things to see. But Schweitzer saw a sweeper with broom and pan. He was steadily sweeping up paper, cigarette stubs, refuse, moving among the people. He swept a space clean and moved on. When he looked back, there was more paper and refuse already thrown by people. Did he fume and fuss and hate? Not at all. He went on steadily, serenely sweeping. That was his part. He did it. In the business of forgiveness, we must always be using our broom and pan.

This powered inner action of Schweitzer began to turn out tangible and striking material quite early. At eight he began organ study. At nine he was playing for Günsbach church services. At eighteen he had finished two schools; had had his first stay in Paris where Charles Marie Widor broke rules and took him on as an organ pupil; and had entered the University of Strasbourg, undertaking major work both in philosophy and theology. He began his first book, a

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short life of Eugène Münch who had taught him organ at school in Mulhouse; this first book was published when he was twenty-three.

At nineteen he did his year of military service in the German army. Equipped with a Greek New Testament, other books and a working mind, he carried his university work that year and began the manuscript of *The Quest of the Historical Jesus,* which was first published, in German, when he was thirty-one.

From nineteen to thirty, he took his doctorates in theology, philosophy, music; was pastor of St. Nicholas church, Strasbourg, and principal of the University's theological seminary; did study and research in Paris and Berlin; wrote six more books and began a seventh; lectured in France and Germany on Goethe, Bach, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Sudermann; founded, with Widor and others, the Paris Bach Society; began his long study of Indian thought; mastered the piano; and decided to be a doctor and go to Africa.

At thirty he began eight years of medical preparation, but he also, for most of that period, continued as professor in the Seminary and pastor at St. Nicholas; did the organ parts several times each winter in Paris at the Bach Society concerts (three days being required each time for travel and performance); completed the German book on Bach; wrote seven others; gave concerts in Spain, Germany, France; raised two years' support for his future hospital in Africa; married (June 18, 1912) Hélène Bresslau, nurse and collaborator, and sailed (March 23, 1913) for Lambaréné on the Ogowé in French Equatorial Africa, with seventy cases of medical and surgical equipment and supplies.

When, in 1914, he and Mrs. Schweitzer were interned at Lambaréné as enemy aliens, he began his *Philosophy of Civilization.* In the thirty-five years following, he has produced another eleven volumes, five full-length addresses on Goethe, and a number of magazine articles; has lectured and played widely on the Continent and in Britain, recorded most of Bach's organ music; has built and run a hospital for 300 in-patients, operated a big food-and-fruit plantation for the patients, staff and a host of grateful friends in the Ogowé valley, raised and administered the large funds for the always greater needs of the growing medical work, and carried on a swelling correspondence with the earth's four corners.

Things are always leading to other things. When he got back to Europe last fall after nine years in Africa without a break, there was a request to write a foreword for a book about to be published in Britain. It was a subject which had long interested him. He wrote the foreword—and then buckled down to a book of his own about the same subject. This was not quite finished when he finally accepted the Aspen invitation (one of seven which he had received in this Goethe 200th anniversary year, all the others of which he had declined) to lecture on Goethe. Having accepted for this one lecture, he was then asked to deliver it twice, once in French, once in German.

But with this continuous action there is precision. He is constantly calling himself pedantic, half-apologizing for his many questions, for his time-consuming examination of things which interest him, the careful, extended entries in one or another of his notebooks. But he gets it all down in mind and notes.

In all the hundreds of conversations in which I interpreted for him, only once was a statement of fact questioned by a visitor. He talked with experts of history, music, organs and their builders, philosophy, religions, biography, drugs, social movements, anthropology, with quantities of dates, facts, quotations, incidents. Never a statement questioned. Presently he met Norman Thomas, animatedly began to tell of Cousin Debs (whom Schweitzer had never seen), born near Colmar, agitator and prisoner and great pioneer in America. Then Thomas hesitatingly broke in, pointing out that Eugene Debs was born in Terre Haute, not Colmar. Schweitzer stopped in full flight. It was worked out between them that it must have been Eugene's father who was born in Alsace. I have no doubt that Schweitzer is already digging into that mat-

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ter in France. It was the only imprecision appearing in his American tour, so far as I know.

This inner action and precision is at the root of his philosophy, and consequently of his life. Thinking—individually, deeply, continuously, precisely—is a chief duty of man. Modern influences and tendencies are all against that. He is all for it. There perhaps is the core of Schweitzer. His Epilogue in *Out of My Life and Thought*, written in 1931, states it succinctly. Light itself, in electric signs, is used to dim man's own thinking and "to induce him to buy *their* boot polish or *their* soup tablets." Group unity is largely substituted for individual thinking and action—with disastrous results.

The widow of a former German cabinet minister was to come to lunch with us, and we told Dr. Schweitzer. He spoke of the premier of that cabinet, whom he had known. He was a good man, but could never make a decision on his own—always had to have a committee (we all laughed)—and the cabinet fell, the country was ruined. But don't laugh; look at Napoleon. For better or for worse, he did pretty well until he came back from Elba, for he always made his own decisions. After that he used committees.

Schweitzer is neither the neon-light nor the committee type. I wondered what he thought that first night, as we drove off 42nd Street into Broadway and up to Columbus Circle. He may never have seen the *Saturday Evening Post*, but I've an idea he would agree with Richard Armour's four lines printed there after Schweitzer sailed:

> Committees are what
> Folks like me and you,
> Due to weakness of will,
> Are committed to.

Yet perhaps the most moving talk of comradeship and appreciation which he made in America was to 250 mission board members, human units in one of the most committee-ized efforts of modern times.

That quality of understanding, oneness, solidarity with others quite different from himself who yet labor for the same ends he seeks, is appealing. So is his humor. In smaller groups, especially, he is full of it. It is not canned; it doesn't come from Münchhausen or Punch or the radio. It comes out of the myriad experiences of his life. It always has a point, often clinches one. His is authentic humor.

This element of authenticity is basic to his philosophy and life. (One keeps saying "philosophy and life," although in relation to Schweitzer it is a redundant phrase.) Authenticity runs through everything. It and precision are close fellows. It dominates some of the smallest acts. On his recent visit, scores of photographers were always asking him to wave, to gesture. He consistently declined, one of the few things he repeatedly refused to do. Photographers eventually recorded some gestures, but, so far as my observation went, those gestures were all made either in protest against being asked to gesture, or in conversation or lecturing. Such gestures were authentic—even, or perhaps especially, a gesture against gesturing!—and he had no objection to their being photographed.

This inner requirement for authenticity vitiates for him much of the value of the motion picture. It would appear he can scarcely accept for himself this medium which, for history, biography and much else, must depend on a reconstruction of life and action, no matter how objectively and painstakingly attempted. Perhaps also he distrusts the medium as a further handicap on individual thinking and decision.

Tied tightly to his belief in authenticity is his opposition to "exteriorization," of which he thinks the films are guilty, and to which he believes many people are unhappily addicted. This exteriorization creates shells, façades, fronts; it is stucco, veneer, falsies; in it is window-dressing, ballyhoo, sloganeering. It withers, warps and vanishes. Exteriorization always leads to disappointment, disillusionment and despair. As in the Coolidge presidential report on sin, Schweitzer is against it.

But what about his own "exterior"? The unruly hair, the walrus mustache, the high winged collars, the string bow tie, the roughly-cut black suit, the muslin money-bag (he always carries his cash in little white muslin bags with knot-inclined draw

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strings), the string-tied notebooks, the rusty red iron suitcase? They could be props, a get-up, a superb come-on.

One of the most convincing things about Schweitzer, man, mind and spirit, is that they are not. No one who gets to know Schweitzer sees any exteriorization in them. In them is authenticity. In them is Schweitzer—in two senses of the phrase. Schweitzer told me once that his philosophy had not materially changed since he was twenty-five. Neither have his habiliments. He has thought them through; they are his and him. They suit him even when they don't fit him. In them is Schweitzer, even the Schweitzer man of action. For some of them require greater daily action than more modern things would!

A member of our family judges that Schweitzer wishes to be understood rather than remembered. That may be true. Certainly Schweitzer has repeatedly said to friends that what he has to contribute is in his writings; that he can add little if anything by visits, lectures, recitals, meeting people, even though he has pleasure in doing that.

I believe he is wrong.

Many people can think and write, and do so. But even among the minority of any population who read an author comes the question: the man—what is he like, how does he act, how much does his living parallel his writing? Perhaps this is especially true in philosophy and religion.

To such questioners, and to the great majority who never read Schweitzer's works, seeing and knowing Schweitzer is a strengthening experience. He gives the impression, with due allowance for human frailties which he and we know so well, of being of one piece from inside out and from outside in. There slowly grows a kind of correlation between ability to wear that suit, that tie, that mustache, that muslin bag, so naturally, cheerily and authentically, and the ability really to put Reverence for Life into daily operation. They both, at least, require a strong mind and a strong heart effectively working together. And they both require thought, decisiveness and continuing, consistent action about a variety of small things.

Which is what Schweitzer, time and time again, sought to bring home to those asking how Reverence for Life was to be applied in daily intercourse—just by acting simply and rightly, according to the best leading of our minds and hearts, in the thousands of daily instances when we have to act.

But one city reporter at Aspen kept asking that same question over and over again. Schweitzer patiently repeated the answer, each time with one or two additional simple illustrations of kindly acts. But the reporter apparently was looking for at least a three-column head for his well-known midwestern daily. He had drawn himself up to our dinner table where, with two friends, we had been in important consultation about the Lambaréné work. He had been there at least an hour, and Schweitzer's dinner was still uneaten when he asked, for the fifth or sixth time, how Reverence for Life could be practically applied. "Well," said Schweitzer gently, "please do think over what I've offered, and then think of this. Reverence for Life means all life; I am a life; so perhaps you can put it into practice now."

The reporter looked completely frozen for a second; then his laugh rang out over the nearly empty dining room. We all laughed. He put his hand lightly on Schweitzer's shoulder, said, "That's a good one," shook hands all around and, wearing a wide smile, departed.

Reverence for Life can be as simple, practical and effective as that, and so can Schweitzer.

He believes others can, too. For Schweitzer believes in God *and* man.

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American Scholar Forum . . .

ARE AMERICAN WOMEN MAKING THE MOST OF THE RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES FOR WHICH THEY FOUGHT?

The Loss of the Adventurous Spirit

Agnes Rogers

IT IS NOT easy to answer the question whether American women are taking full advantage of the freedom and opportunities they now possess. By what standards are we to judge?

In terms of visible accomplishment, by comparison with the performance of men in fields other than the purely domestic, the answer is bound to be negative. When you consider the fire and ardor with which their older sisters battled for the right to vote, the opportunity for higher education, and the chance to earn their living in other ways than by teaching or nursing, and then you add up the present score of women's performance today, the figures are not impressive.

Embattled suffragettes and strong believers in women's rights confidently predicted that the passage of the Twentieth Amendment would be followed by a wave of political reform. They argued that since women are morally superior, once they had the vote they would waste no time in sweeping out the corrupt politicians. Nothing of the sort happened. Nor, as others prophesied, did a host of women professional politicians spring up all over the country. Not that there have not been

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AGNES ROGERS (Mrs. Frederick Lewis Allen) is a member of the staff of the *Reader's Digest* and was at one time promotion manager of *Harper's Magazine*. She has published magazine articles, light verse, and a number of books, specializing in recent years in volumes of pictures and text, of which the latest is *Women Are Here to Stay*.

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and, indeed, are women in high public office with distinguished records. But the number of them remains exceedingly small. Moreover, there is no such thing as a woman's vote. The records show that on almost all issues, if not on all, women vote as variously as men do.

In the professions—some of them—individual women have risen to the top ranks, but the record is spotty. To be sure, in the field of writing and the theater (and this goes for movies and radio), women performers rank with men on equal terms; but —and it's a big but—they have been doing that for a very long time. Long before the privileges of voting and going to college in great numbers were theirs, women novelists were writing best sellers (even if some of them, generations ago, thought it prudent to use a masculine *nom de plume*).

In the field of medicine, the ancient prejudice against women doctors died hard, but it has finally just about vanished. Today, it is in no way unusual to find women on the staffs of big hospitals and teaching in medical schools. But here, too, the number of distinguished women doctors and surgeons is very small. (A friend of mine says she prefers women doctors because they have to be so outstandingly good to have a real practice that you're likely to get more skillful care than if you were in the hands of a man.) The number of top flight women lawyers is microscopic; also the number of women scientists. And why are there so few outstanding women painters? The list could go on, but it is depressingly familiar. Even in the field of teaching, women's traditional occupation, it is a news event of the first importance when a woman is appointed president of a women's college.

But perhaps the professions do not offer a fair test. Perhaps, although they are at least theoretically open to women, there still remains in many of them a tight cordon of prejudice—either on the part of fellow members who resist competition by women, or on the part of clients, patients or other people outside the professional ranks—that keeps women from scaling the heights in greater numbers. Suppose we look at business in general, where women made such giant strides in the nineteen-twenties. It is undeniably true that in the period immediately after World War I there was a widespread feeling among bright girl college graduates that the world was their oyster; they came in droves to the big cities, especially to New York, to win fortune and possibly fame. The college diploma had commercial value (much more than at present, when it is no longer a rarity), and talented and ambitious graduates found it fairly easy, in an expanding market, to land a job as "editorial assistant" or "executive assistant" or "junior executive." These girls scorned positions as secretaries, and thought of themselves as executives in the making. They felt that they had more to offer than high school graduates, and they convinced prospective employers that this was indeed so. Advertising agencies provided a fertile field, the fashion industry had many ramifications to offer, department stores were hospitable, women's magazines were expanding—and in all of these areas feminine talent was respected. And I believe it is fair to say that most of those college girls who twenty-odd years ago plunged into the business world saw themselves as some day sitting at the boss's desk. They were not putting in the time until they married, nor were they primarily looking for husbands. They expected to get married some day, but meanwhile it was exciting and satisfying to hold down a responsible job, for which you were well paid (sometimes more than your brother, who was in a big law firm or bank), and to live the free life of a great city, with an apartment of your own or shared with a kindred soul who, herself, had a substantial job. It was a heady time for girls who had grown up in the era of chaperones.

I'm not saying that all college graduates conformed to this picture. But the type of girl I've been describing was common enough. To be sure, she had to have ambition beyond the common run, and a strong measure of independence, for there were still people who disapproved of college for women, who lifted an eyebrow at

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the idea of a "nice" girl in a business office, and who wondered darkly about the propriety of girls living alone without an older woman. But she had grounds for believing that her ambitions would be satisfied—if she worked hard enough and shrewdly enough.

With that running start, one would expect to see many more women in the upper echelons of business and industry than there are today. Granted, it is not difficult to assemble an impressive roster of successful women executives—but what does that prove? After all, the number of wage-earning women in this country rose from five million in 1900 to more than sixteen million in 1946. It would be more impressive if there were so many that one would never dream of making such a list. For what it may be worth, I toss in at this point a very minor statistic. In looking over ten consecutive pages of *Who's Who in America* for 1948-1949, I counted 151 men's names, as compared with 12 women's names—and of the latter, seven were writers and two, actresses.

If any one questions my contention that although women are now received (if not welcomed) in almost every field of endeavor, a disproportionately small number expect eminence, let him talk (as I have) to a goodly number of girls graduating from college and looking for jobs. I think he will be struck by the paradox that although a college education is generally accepted as the normal and expected thing for girls of what might loosely be called the upper and middle classes, and although the inevitable next step for them is some kind of job (unless they plan to do graduate work) until they marry, the girls themselves have no great expectations concerning their lot in the working world. They seem to have lowered their sights considerably from the targets of their counterparts of twenty years ago. It is significant that the term "career girl" now means, in advertising language, any girl who goes to an office.

Of course there are exceptions, but I am struck by the humility and the low estimate of their own worth that mark so large a number of well-educated girls of superior endowments. And their willingness to accept the status of useful but humble cog in an enterprise directed by men is baffling to me. As I remarked before, the college diploma is no longer a rarity, and its commercial value has, consequently, decreased. Where the fault lies, I do not know—whether in the colleges or the business world, or with the girls themselves—the fact seems to be that graduates no longer feel that a college education has given them better equipment for the next step than that provided by, let us say, a good high school and a secretarial course.

The uncertainty of our times is, I suppose, partly responsible for this humility and lack of confidence so prevalent among girls who apparently have every reason to *think* that they are going to set the world on fire. But there are other factors involved. One of the chief ones is our present preoccupation with security, which is in direct opposition to a passion for independence—the motive force that activated many of the pioneers among women in a man's world. The scars left by the Great Depression still show; many young women of today still remember vividly the anxious days at home in the early nineteen-thirties, no matter how much their parents then tried to shield the children. And with the desire for security goes a reluctance to take responsibility. Security is best cherished by not sticking your neck out. Work hard, do much more than is required, but let somebody else make the final decision. You thus avoid blame. You also avoid recognition and praise—except from your immediate boss, to whom you are becoming indispensable. Many a bright girl with a flair for writing, who formerly would have taken a whirl at free-lance writing, with all of its chances, is safely if anonymously ensconced in a research department, working feverishly on material that will never carry her name.

Another factor in the over-all picture of office life today is a by-product of the increased social awareness that is, most happily, a sign of the times. More often than not, the girl of fortunate background and

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superior gifts is so aware of the problems of the low-ranking employees that she identifies herself with the humblest file clerk rather than with the management. She is more deeply concerned over a raise for Sadie Smith, the typist, than over the company's production record and its profit for the year. This is a humane and, to a large extent, fine attitude, but it does not lead to a chair in the Board Room. For it turns her attention away from the real function of the enterprise of which she is a part.

So far we have been considering the performance of women in extra-domestic areas. What about the ones who list their occupation as "housewife"? Can we say that, on the whole, the American woman who has had the advantages of economic comfort and the new freedoms is a happier wife and mother, a greater credit to her community, a richer personality, a better integrated human being than was her grandmother? Quite a number of articulate people don't think so. According to Philip Wylie, she is a pretty bad lot. Such critics have, unquestionably, lethal ammunition in the form of statistics on divorce (one marriage in three), the quality of intellectual fare designed solely for women (soap operas, for example), or women's sheeplike behavior as consumers. And these critics are not the only people who feel that it is their duty and their right to discuss women. The poor creatures are told on the one hand that they are abject miserable worms, but at the same time subjected to an unending avalanche of suggestion, advice and exhortation urging them to be, not just better, but impossible!

Without aligning myself on the side of the detractors, I must admit that I do not see any clear and shining proof that women, either in the domestic sphere or the world outside, have as yet found the techniques by which to take full advantage of their opportunities—but in the words of the traffic offender in court who feels that he has something on his side, I wish to say at this point, "Guilty, with explanation."

It is not generally realized, I believe, that the women in this country have been living through a revolution that has completely altered their own habits and society's attitude toward, and demands upon, them. The revolution is no less drastic for being a peaceful one, unnoticed by many women and unwanted by many. The freedoms now accorded them were won at a price—a high price. New doors were opened, to be sure; new areas were uncovered; new opportunities blossomed. But the old duties and responsibilities remained—shorn of their former compensations. Take the status of housekeeper. In former years, the mistress of the house had an administrative office of considerable scope and dignity. With the gradual change in living conditions—the drift to smaller houses and apartments, the disappearance of servants, the outpouring of time-saving and labor-saving equipment, the appearance on the market of prepared and frozen foods—there has grown the idea that the mechanics of housekeeping consist of disagreeable chores to be got through with in a jiffy. The housewife is expected to provide excellent food and attractive well-ordered living quarters, but gets little credit for doing so. Why should she? It's so easy! There was a time, long long ago, when households were arranged to suit the convenience and comfort of the older members, but now that it is highly important that youth must be served first, the conscientious mother frequently finds that her status is somewhere between those of nursemaid and chauffeur. Moreover, according to current authorities (who do not always agree), Mother must be always standing by, should need arise—but gracefully in the background, lest she interfere in some way with the full flowering of her children's personalities.

As a wife, she is expected to be the shrewd dispenser of the family purse; the comforter when her husband is depressed; the wise counsellor in his business problems; the enchantress who holds him by her radiant youthful loveliness; the gay companion with whom he likes to rough it in the woods. Moreover, she's a member of the community and a citizen of the world, and as such must take an active part in local affairs, and be thoroughly familiar with the latest development between Stalin

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and Tito. That isn't all. She is still the guardian of the finer things of life. The church is her special province. Not as a vestryman—she must not aspire to matters of broad policy—but in a more humble capacity, she must work faithfully and devotedly. She must also "keep up" with new trends in the arts, read the new books, listen to the new music, and in general contribute to the support of matters cultural.

If she hasn't a job outside the home—and a third of the more than sixteen million wage earners are married—she must be aware of a future sharp change in her life when the children are grown, and be planting the seeds for that absorbing outside interest that will fill her life when the horrid day arrives.

Is it any wonder that with this impossible array of standards held up to her, the modern woman is often forced to the conclusion that she has somehow failed? Or that, according to existing yardsticks, she has not wholly fulfilled the bright destiny so ardently foretold by her former champions?

Give her time. She isn't doing too badly. No one person can fill all the roles that the critics and exhorters of American women assign to each one. It's high time that women as individuals resisted the idea that they must heed every admonition addressed to them vaguely as a sex. It is high time that they realized that they are people first, and women afterwards, and that different individuals among them have special talents. Especially, let them stop taking hold of the short end of the stick out of sheer humility.

People in Skirts

Worth Tuttle Hedden

If any healthy girl still clung to the home waiting for a husband; if all wives and widows in need of gainful employment still "took in sewing" or sold female accessories and remedies from shuttered parlor to shuttered parlor; if all spinsters still clerked in stores, taught school, or "made their home" with relatives; if women's colleges had to beg for applicants; if there were as few women in executive positions, in the professions, the arts and sciences as there were thirty years ago; if the polls, now set up in city schools and on small-town porches, were used only by men; if no women were active in politics, held no local, state or national office; if the 1949 girl graduate had no clearer understanding of herself and her future as a woman than the 1919 one had—if all these suppositions were facts, then the numerous self-appointed critics (of both sexes) of women would be right in saying that women are not making the most of the franchise in higher education, suffrage and choice of occupation, which some women fought for and all women got.

Most critical observers of women can't be trusted for accuracy, because they haven't a scientific approach to their material. They don't realize that the theory of relativity is just as applicable to women

WORTH TUTTLE HEDDEN was at one time secretary of the Virginia Bureau of Vocations for Women, and is the author of "The Autobiography of an Ex-Feminist," *Wives of High Pasture*, *The Other Room*, and occasional articles, short stories and book reviews.

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as to men or planets or Einsteinian systems. They set up a specious criterion for women by measuring the achievements of intelligent men and exceptional women. Furthermore, they insist on viewing women as a collective unit, and comment on *Her* as on a new and unsatisfactory work by Nature. Most recently, in an effort to be superficially up-to-date, they're referring to women as "a minority," adding them to the list of groups against whom some Americans (men *and* women) discriminate. Some women, like some men and some children, are sometimes problems to themselves and to others, but women are not "a minority," numerically or socially. Prejudice against a racial or religious minority is based on artificial assumptions which can be overcome; but prejudice against women as "the white, gentile, Protestant adult male's equal" in the economic world is based on a real "inferiority," which for the sex as a whole will be with us longer, perhaps, than the poor. Over-all discrimination against women in the matter of hire and promotion, if not in wages, is understandable in the case of young women who are always suspect as IA prospects for marriage. But there's no justification for it in the case of older women, who usually have settled their marital status one way or another. Not since the Industrial Revolution has it been practicable to generalize about women occupationally. In the modern world each individual woman has her being in an environment subject to constant change, and—if you look closely enough—*perceptibly* different from the environment of every other individual.

But most critics of women are astigmatic, as well as unscientific. They can't see distinctly, even if they look closely at their generalized Woman. When they're not scowling at women for failing to use their higher education and their ballot collectively and wisely for righting the world's wrongs, they're blinking at their silliness and frivolity. These critics see people in skirts shopping, going to matinees, bridge parties, and club meetings, while people in pants work, and rush to a typewriter to deplore women's waste of time. If in civilian life, as in ecclesiastical and military, American women dressed according to occupation and status, there would be less false testimony against them. Then the generalized mass would be broken up into groups indicated by garb, and the groups into individuals indicated by insignia. It wouldn't be accurate, but it would help in distinguishing the childless, man-supported woman hurrying hither and yon in search of amusement; the busy mother taking time out from a lonely job to shop for a husband-at-work and children-in-school, or for the recreation and association with her compères she can't have in the evenings or during weekends; the professional woman on vacation seeing a show; the business woman using her lunch hour to shop.

To the professional Woman-Critics I have described, a home is a house equipped with time and labor saving devices, and therefore can be "organized" as a business office or a factory is, to ensure maximum efficiency—in this case, to give the housewife *leisure* to do *consistent* work for the betterment of her community, or to turn a talent or a skill to profitable account. Housework can be organized and sometimes, if all the gadgets function, all the children are in school, the husband isn't ill or on vacation, and no guests arrive, it stays organized for days on end. But home personnel (aside from the wife-mother) is not in the efficiency expert's scope. It isn't hired on a certain date and placed in a certain department on a definite schedule. It isn't there to work; it is there to eat and relax. Babies aren't always received on Date Preferred, and they hardly ever come in (future) time-saving assortments of twos or threes or fours. Frequently, one's children are a hodge-podge of age and sex, temperament and anaphylaxis. If a mother of multiple children, in the span between her eldest's birth and her youngest's taking-off, can, as one Woman-Critic said she must, "care for each child physically and see that he is mentally and emotionally satisfied" and still be her husband's "equal partner" (Pearl Buck: *The American Argument*) and good companion, she gets top rating

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from me in efficiency if she finds time to go to the dentist. (That there's leisure I don't deny—the joker is in not knowing when to expect it or how long it will last.)

The Woman-Critic is subject to hallucinations, often seeing a sex that isn't there. The most recent example of this tendency comes from Eslanda Goode Robeson in *The American Argument* with Pearl Buck:

> If the mother takes the trouble to plan sensible regular hours for sleeping and eating for the baby and sticks to them, she will be able to plan her other time and activities as well. When a baby is well trained, has good habits, and is not spoiled, it is very easy to leave *someone* to keep an eye on him or listen out for him. The same goes for children of all ages.

Who is *someone,* if not another woman? If the mother is as lucky generally as she is specifically in having an old-fashioned pediatrician and a tractable baby, *someone* might be her mother or her mother-in-law or a high school baby-sitter. Or it might be a servant bringing up juvenile delinquents *in absentia.* No Woman-Critic is solving actual problems of women when he uses x-woman to work out his equations.

There's nothing "wrong" with women. The trouble is with the Woman-Critic, who expects some humans to be superhuman—expects mothers to do two long-term jobs as well as some other human beings do one, and expects unmarried "career" women to work at top efficiency while they postpone, or curtail, or deny the full expression of a primary instinct which other human beings express as a matter of course.

Nature intended for women to bear children, and most women do. Nature also intended for women to nurture children through infancy, and most women do. Nature intended for women to bear more children over a longer period than modern women do, but modern women get no reprieve there. Because of increased educational requirements in a more complex world, the fewer children are under the maternal wing, high and widespread though it may be, as long as a succession of many children used to be. What women employed in this essential industry do with their free time is no more the concern of a self-appointed critic than an inquiry into the recreational hobbies of food-transport workers is of a legally designated labor relations board. If women, goaded beyond endurance by their censors, should ever organize nationally, go on strike, and refuse to bear children unless the government guarantees to take them over at birth, or to hold jobs unless the government guarantees normal sex lives—and if Congress should pass such a bill—then woman's freedom would so closely approximate man's that it would be legitimate for every Tom, Dick and exceptional Harriet to demand the Most of every woman. (John Humphrey Noyes in his Oneida Community (1848-1879) gave women members such a freedom, demanded and received equivalent work for equivalent compensation—at the expense of the private family.)

In bestowing minds in addition to maternal instincts on female humans, Nature perhaps intended for the superior young in the animal kingdom to have superior care. Until a century ago, most women used their inerudite minds for this purpose—only the exceptional woman, exceptionally situated, being exceptionally educated for non-domestic pursuits. After men upset most women's equilibrium with their inventions, exceptional women tried to restore balance with a sexually impartial education. Women's college curricula, patterned on those of men's, emphasized women's mental future and ignored their physical and emotional. Early generations of young feminists, with their minds on probation, adored them for it. But what good was there in the diploma's proof of equal intelligence if that intelligence were not to be used, as men use theirs, for a career in the world, self-support, and, in due time, the cooperative support of a family? Women in the past, having had no alternative, had made too much of maintaining a home and bringing up a family. Young feminists believed what European feminists wrote, that community kitchens and nurseries, staffed by domestically-minded women, were just around the corner. Waiting at the intersection, they

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believed what exceptional childless women told them, that babies slept most of the time, toddlers went to kindergarten, older children to school (every day in the week, every week in the year, and were never sick!), and (in common with the Woman-Critic) that any moron could be hired to cook and clean. In the halcyon years between 1900 and 1917 bureaus of vocations for women dotted the country, pointing the way to Freedom as emphatically as, in the 1850 decade, signposts had pointed West for young men. It was a poor-spirited girl graduate who didn't plan a career, follow it until she had, at least, paid back to the world in dollars and sense what had gone into her education. It was a brave-spirited one who created a scandal by an undergraduate marriage, or even announced her engagement at commencement.

We who were those post-Victorian feminists still love the Victorian ones, and the suffragettes who clamored and fought for our human rights. They removed all handicaps except the physical and what follows in its wake if we formally acknowledge it. But they also made it possible for us to choose between formally acknowledging it and ignoring or denying it, between marriage-and-children and all other full-time careers. Our quarrel with them is not that they gave us a liberal arts education, but that they led us to believe our lives could be as uncomplicated as men's lives if we chose to live as fully.

Whether modern collegiate courses in euthenics and child psychology have given a professional status and intellectual interest to women's essential industry, or whether Nature, aided by sentiment for young men in uniform, by the G. I. Bill of Rights for young men in civvies, is responsible for this generation's clearer vision, I don't know. I do know that undergraduates around electric grills are concerned with the future of all peoples, and not, as we around chafing dishes were, with only that of college women; that they flaunt their engagement or wedding rings or, as graduates, step from commencement platform to altar with no apology. Thinking of the future family and its common assets rather than of themselves as its preferred stock, some of them use their "majors" to help finance their husbands' graduate technical training, and some of them add the care of a baby or babies to cooking and scrubbing and laundering in a slot washing-machine—the only co-operative item in the early feminist dream, except commercial diaper service, that has come true, and that, alas, without a drone to run it! Searching for a baby-sitter when they have money to pay her, these young mothers have no hope of permanent proxies. Having seen their college-bred mothers in the machine and servant age stumble after The Gleam, they're less deluded as to the amount of "I-time" they'll have. They know that such as there will be of it will be in hours rather than in weeks and months, and that they'll have to wait years for the consistent utilization of a talent or a skill. Meanwhile they're discovering that a liberal arts education is of more value to them in the day-to-day rearing of children than it is to many a man in business.

When the initial phase of creative domestic life is past, the tears of some of these young mothers, burdened with a talent or a skill they can neither utilize nor rid themselves of, will fall into the swirling waters of the Bendix. Others who have not made the decision between emphasis on home and that on career, and the acceptance of the sacrifices the decision entails, will seek the psychoanalytic couch or the divorce court. Still others, not accepting I-time when they get it, will over-act the mother role, but it seems to me preferable to have some "hams" in home talent productions than to close the shows. Often women accused of "spoiling" a husband and children are merely creating a kind of oasis for those members of the family who must support it, or prepare to support or maintain another family in a frantic world. Every household needs one person in it who isn't under compulsion to be at a certain place at a certain time. Some women will continue to squirm between the horns of their peculiar dilemma, but I am convinced that a majority of young wives today are on firm ground and are facing their individual problems with more intelligence and realism, more courage and

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imagination, than has been true of the generations immediately preceding theirs.

And this attitude, I think, is characteristic of the new "career" girl as well. I cannot agree with Miss Rogers that young women in business generally underestimate their worth. As she says, the possession of an academic degree is no longer "something" for them. Neither is it for young men. Many of both now are finding an M.A. or even a Ph.D. as much a prerequisite for a smooth take-off in business and industry as an A.B. or B.S. alone used to be. Knowing that their future will include at least self-support, the ambitious among them satisfy preliminary requirements and compete for a chair in the board room.

Ignorant of their future, young women do not feel justified in borrowing money or working their way through graduate school to prepare for a vocation they may not follow. I think they're simply being as realistic as the young women who accept immediate positions in women's essential industry. They haven't the illusions of grandeur their grandmothers and mothers had and *are*, perhaps, willing to be content with an economic security and an enrichment of mind their spinster aunts did not have—if spinsterhood is in the cards for them. The ambitious among *them*, possessed of unusual integrity and ability, know that by the expenditure of unusual energy they can go as far as similarly endowed young men can go. I know a pretty little atomic physicist who, having received all the scholarships and awards available to young men in her field, has, to the relief of elder scientists, turned her back on domestic life to face a brilliant future in the laboratory. But for a young person of either sex in the ultra-competitive literary world to throw up a research job with dependable pay for an adventure (the word was never more aptly used) in free-lancing displays a kind of wishful thinking in a head more at ease against an antimacassar than against a subway window.

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The Reader Replies . . .

THE READER REPLIES *regularly carries comments by readers on the contents of the preceding American Scholar Forum. In the Autumn number, for example,* THE READER REPLIES *will contain letters about the debate in the current number on the question: "Are American Women Making the Most of the Rights and Privileges for Which They Fought?" In addition, miscellaneous letters of comment on various articles appear in this department. All communications should be addressed to: The Editor,* THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, *415 First Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., and should not exceed 300 words in length, except for comments on the previous Forum, which may run to 500. Because of limitations of space, the editors cannot guarantee to print all communications received. Letters intended for publication in the Spring number should be mailed before December 15.*—(EDITOR)

WALKING BACKWARD INTO THE FUTURE

A Middle Position Toward China

"Walking Backward into the Future" describes our conduct in China since V-J Day all too well. I agree with Mr. Sears that our error in China has lain not in the execution of policy, but in its objectives. We have failed inside our own minds. Therefore we may expect continued disaster in Asia until American thinking becomes more realistic and revolutionary in its approach to Asia.

In historical perspective, it already seems incredible that we could have backed ourselves so stupidly into the oncoming Chinese Revolution. Several of the dubious assumptions analyzed by Mr. Sears as underlying our current foreign policy apply to our performance in China: "Recovery rather than reform"—"Where we must choose between communism and reaction, the latter is preferable"—"It is more essential that we have the support of governments than of peoples"—"Russia's ideological expansion must and can be stopped by economic aid." These doubtful premises typify our China record, as he points out. "We wanted Chiang as an ally against Russia and . . . were prepared to swallow anything he might do to the Chinese people, . . . a policy based neither on diplomacy nor democracy, but on short-run military strategy." These harsh strictures, of course, do not do us justice for our good intentions and tremendous generosity, our relief aid and construction projects. But history is a harsh mistress, and has not let us off for these good qualities either.

In power politics, to be sure, the big battalions count, and morality alone cannot stop the armed forces of evil. In Chinese politics, however, moral prestige is itself one of the biggest battalions. China's peasant society is still based on the old Confucian

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ethic. Moral values are still esteemed and moral conduct still recognized as the necessary sanction of power.

Not to realize this was a practical error on our part. Cynical but intelligent power-politicians (e.g., some Marxists) know the value of morality (or "ideology") as a political weapon. Would-be global-strategists who forget it, get licked. The real shame of our China fiasco was typified north of Nanking last winter, when Nationalist troops with adequate American arms could not find a cause worth using them for.

Recrimination over China policy, of course, plays into the hands both of Communists and of anti-administration politicians. Between these noisome extremists who do their best to polarize the political scene, we must quickly establish a new middle ground; for it should be plain by now that the division of a revolutionary Asia into revolutionary Communist and anti-revolutionary anti-Communist camps, will give the world to the Communists. A revolutionary anti-communism is not beyond our capabilities, and is the only thing that will save us.

We must find a secure middle ground toward China, so that we neither support a predatory Chiang-type reaction nor oppose Communist-led reforms like the emancipation of women, the organization of youth, or the spread of literacy. This calls for a central ideological position from which we can approve genuine reforms, oppose Communist evils, and stand for real principles of democracy. In our American heritage we have the makings of such a middle position, once we give them an ideological framework.

I suggest that the Marxist perversion of world-history, now being sold to China, can be usefully "subverted" by a simple alteration in the Marxist formula: the stages of man's social evolution go through (1) feudalism (including semi-feudalism, landlordism), (2) capitalism (including imperialism), and into (3) not Communist "socialism" but Individualist Democracy (the welfare state, etc.). At any point along this progression (by this alternative formula) man's social development may be halted by tyranny (dictatorship, totalitarianism, Stalinism); and China faces tyranny today. This scheme is, I admit, a bit off-the-cuff and might better be handled in a book than a paragraph. The reader can doubtless do better. The fact remains that our response to the Communist challenge in Asia calls upon us for ideological innovation, a reinterpretation of the social process in terms meaningful to poor peasants and insecure students in underdeveloped areas.

The one sure thing is that this ideological innovation cannot be achieved in American armchairs, but must come from American minds close up against Asian realities. This suggests that if Mr. Sears and a host of other Americans, who realize that we must put American ideals in Asiatic terms, could spend a few months apiece in the grass-roots of India, Indonesia and the Philippines, we might soon be on our way.

John K. Fairbank
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Doctrines and Self-Interest

"Bipartisanship" in foreign policy, coupled with mass hysteria and the widespread notion that it has become America's divinely Manifest Destiny to save all the world from Red Sin, have of late made it increasingly difficult for responsible publicists to engage in critical analysis of the course of the Republic in world affairs. We still lack a Politburo and a political police. Yet freedom of criticism of prevailing beliefs and practices has long since begun to contract to limits approaching those in the Soviet Union—to the obvious detriment of democratic processes, of effective statesmanship, and of objective evaluation of where we are and whither we are going. As Chancellor Hutchins put it last June: "We do not throw people into jail because they are alleged to differ with official dogma. We throw them out of work. . . ." Many academicians seek safety in silence. Unorthodox radio commentators are "off the air." Only

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the most daring journalists and columnists are still bold enough to confront pleasant fictions with uncomfortable facts.

This deplorable state of the Union moves me to hail Laurence Sears's challenging article with devout thanksgiving and to extend heartiest congratulations to the editors of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR for publishing it—since they doubtless knew that it would bring far more brick-bats than bouquets. A totalitarian State can function, somehow, in a stagnant atmosphere of asphyxiation, if only its rulers can resist the temptation to become fools or knaves. A democracy cannot conceivably function without fresh air and new thoughts constantly blowing through the marketplace of ideas. Mr. Sears's stimulating exposé of the subjective sources of our diplomatic failures, whatever one thinks of his conclusions, is not only a much needed plea for ventilation, but is itself a strong wind sweeping away many of the cobwebs in our minds.

Mr. Sears's final contention is that we can prevail against communism only if we substitute love of democracy for hatred of communism as our motivation, and only if we make of democracy a means, as well as an end, in our contest with the enemy. Given the unstated premise, I am disposed to agree. The question of whether we have what it takes to develop, in time, such a policy, and to pay the price exacted by it, is one not yet resolved. Nor is any simple answer available to the question as to whether democracy, even when championed by those who best understand its meaning and its methods, can be given greater appeal than communism among the dark masses of Eurasia and Africa where the preconditions of democracy—i.e., general literacy, high living standards, a tradition of tolerance, and long practice in exercising the responsibilities of freedom—do not yet exist and cannot soon or easily be brought into being.

Mr. Sears, however, ignores a more basic question. He has thrown the "devil theory of history" out the front window, but readmitted it by the backdoor. In asserting that American policy should be directed toward promoting "democracy" rather than supporting "anti-communism," he is merely substituting an affirmative doctrinal objective for a negative one. The late Charles Beard would have argued that the one purpose was as fatuous and as impossible of realization as the other, and that the only proper and practicable concern of foreign policy is the protection of national interest, realistically defined. This currently heretical view lacks glamour but has much cogency. Repeated failures in the pursuit of unattainable ideological objectives—e.g., "Make the World Safe for Democracy," "War to End Wars," "The Atlantic Charter," "The Four Freedoms," etc.—may yet beget a reorientation of opinion and policy in the direction of *Realpolitik*.

Such a development would by no means be altogether dismal. It might indeed promote acquiescence in the inevitable diversity of the world, and foster toleration of many varieties of pagans and infidels, however obnoxious they may be, so long as they do not threaten the security of America and its allies. The first and last test of a foreign policy is its success in achieving its purposes. A policy based on the relatively tangible desiderata of political, strategic and economic self-interest is more likely to be successful than one couched in terms of the impalpable and evanescent fictions and fantasies of messianic universalism.

For contemporary mankind as a whole, the supreme expression of a rational universalism and, simultaneously, the ultimate act of a rational *Realpolitik* would clearly be the establishment by consent of World Government. Short of this, the pursuit of any unlimited and universal ideological goal is a snare and a delusion, whatever the semantic or institutional forms in which it may be put. Russians and Americans alike will continue to suffer frustration so long as they prefer quixotic missions of global salvation to cold calculations of power, profit and welfare. The inevitable consequences of such preferences were admirably stated, almost half a century ago, by William Graham Sumner (1840-1910) in his essay on "War":

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If you want war, nourish a doctrine. Doctrines are the most frightful tyrants to which men ever are subject, because doctrines get inside of a man's own reason and betray him against himself. Civilized men have done their fiercest fighting for doctrines. . . . Now when any doctrine arrives at that degree of authority, the name of it is a club which any demagogue may swing over you at any time and apropos of anything. In order to describe a doctrine, we must have recourse to theological language. A doctrine is an article of faith. It is something which you are bound to believe, not because you have some rational grounds for believing it is true, but because you belong to such and such a church or denomination. . . . A policy in a State we can understand. . . . [But] a doctrine is an abstract principle; it is necessarily absolute in its scope and abstruse in its terms; it is a metaphysical assertion. It is never true, because it is absolute, and the affairs of men are all conditioned and relative. . . . Any politician or editor, can, at any moment, put a new extension on it. The people acquiesce in the doctrine and applaud it because they hear the politician repeat it, and the politicians repeat it because they think it is popular. So it grows. . . . It may mean anything or nothing, at any moment, and no one knows how it will be. You accede to it now, within the vague limits of what you suppose it to be; therefore, you will have to accede to it tomorrow when the same name is made to cover something which you never have heard or thought of. If you allow a political catchword to go on and grow, you will awaken someday to find it standing over you, the arbiter of your destiny, against which you are powerless, as men are powerless against delusions. . . . What can be more contrary to sound statesmanship and common sense than to put forth an abstract assertion which has no definite relation to any interest of ours now at stake, but which has in it any number of possibilities of producing complications which we cannot foresee, but which are sure to be embarrassing when they arise?

Frederick L. Schuman
Williams College
Williamstown, Massachusetts

Opportunism Is Necessary

Professor Sears's attack on American foreign policy sounds very much to a democratic middle-class American like a disguised plea by a fellow-traveler for Russia and Russian communism, although the professed object of his interest appears to be all the poor people of the earth. One comes to this conclusion as much from what he omits to say as from what he says.

He starts off frankly by saying, "We assumed the triumph of middle-class democracy, not realizing that the tide was already ebbing, and that before a quarter of a century should pass, democracy would have perished in most of Europe, and the middle class would have been largely destroyed."

Toward the middle of his article he says, "We assume it is not acts of ours which create a sense of insecurity in the minds of the Russian leaders." Also, "From new discoveries come new social orders." "Whether we like it or not we are in the midst of a revolution. Any attempt to ignore it is futile and disastrous."

In other words, "There is a wave of the future." He says merely that on that wave the poor people are going to get more to eat, but the implication seems to be that Russia is the center of that wave.

Every clear-headed American knows that we are not fighting the communism of Marx and Lenin, though we think that in destroying the upper and middle classes the doctrine is far too one-sided to satisfy our democratic ideals. We are fighting the cruel, ruthless, stupid tyranny of the Kremlin, which is merely a relic of the kings and potentates of antique history, and is cunningly using communism and fanatical poverty as a front to deceive the world. The world fortunately (all except Professor Sears) is beginning to see through them, and America is winning the cold war in Germany, France and Italy.

The kind of democracy we want is not one that eliminates the upper class and the middle class, and leaves only the ignorant working class which seems more bent on destroying itself, along with everything else, than on utilizing all human developments and abilities, including the ability of rich men to make money, which is the necessary support of all governments.

If Professor Sears would look back over history he would see that all national diplomacy has been opportunistic. The American people don't like alliance with either Fascists or Communists, but when you're fighting a war you don't do what you would like to do but what you have to do

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to win. When you have a parcel of gangsters in the Kremlin you have to fight them as gangsters are fought. Professor Sears seems to be one of the few men in America who are unaware that the men in the Kremlin are gangsters, and have precious little to do with revolution in favor of poor people and the prevalence of sweetness and light in the world (the opposite of the darkness behind the iron curtain).

Sherwin Cody
Hilltop Park
Dobbs Ferry, New York

Here Lies the Task

Professor Sears points up some of the confusions in our foreign policy, yet his own contribution tends to make confusion more confounded. It is quite true that the defense of the status quo domestic and international, by all means military or other, is no answer to world revolution. But it is also true that social reform is no answer to imperialism. It is a tragic dilemma for American foreign policy that in many regions of the world social progress has become identified with Communist revolution and that in turn Communist revolution has come to mean expansion of Russian power. If American foreign policy must oppose the expansion of Russian power—as I think it must—it must, by that same token, oppose Communist revolution (where it can be done with a chance of success).

It would indeed be convenient if American policy could substitute a liberal or socialist revolution for a Communist one wherever revolutionary change seems to be inevitable. Yet what would be convenient is not always practicable. And it is the common quality of most revolutionary situations in our time that there seems to be a choice only between Communist revolution and Fascist counter-revolution. Neither in China, nor in Greece, nor in Spain is there a middle ground between the two extremes upon which a viable social and political order could be built. If you don't want one extreme to prevail you cannot fail, by the very logic of the situation, to favor the victory of the other.

No argument is needed to show that the choice between such alternatives is morally embarrassing and politically dangerous. Yet such is the nature of most political choices. Professor Sears, following the liberal counsel of perfection, tries to escape from this dilemma by postulating a third alternative which would avoid the moral embarrassment and political risks of the others but would, even if it were feasible, create worse political risks instead. There is nothing in history to show that democratic communities in which social justice is realized are better able to withstand foreign aggression than authoritarian societies. What did it avail the Greek communities when Philip of Macedonia stood at their gates that theirs was a higher morality of politics? What good did it do the communities of Asia Minor that they were, in every respect but the military, superior to the hordes of Timur? And the recent fate of the model democracies of Czechoslovakia, Norway, Denmark and the Netherlands is still fresh in our memory.

The choice before American policy is not between a real evil and an imaginary good, but between two evils. A wise policy will choose the lesser of the two, and American foreign policy is indeed subject to criticism on the ground that, obsessed with the fear of communism, it has not always been able to distinguish clearly between the greater and the lesser evil. Its mistake in China was not support of an autocratic government, but support of an autocratic government which from the outset was doomed to failure. American policy has not always realized that under certain conditions revolution is inevitable and that foreign support of autocratic government will make it only more so. That this means, in the short run, also an increase in Russian power is, however regrettable, equally inevitable. That this will be so also in the long run is the Russian hope derived from the Marxian myth of the international solidarity of the proletariat. It is a curious spectacle to see the West falling victim to that myth. In actuality, what happened after the French

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Revolution and what has already happened in Yugoslavia will happen elsewhere. In the measure in which the ideas of the Bolshevist revolution will spread beyond the frontiers of the Soviet Union they will be turned against the power of the Russian state. Here —and not in the prevention of the inevitable nor in the creation of the impossible—lies the task of constructive American statesmanship.

Hans J. Morgenthau
Chicago, Illinois

The Product of Just Law

The excellent article by Laurence Sears provides a clear insight into some of the basic assumptions from which present American foreign policy has been conceived—and equally clearly points out the weak and fallacious nature of many of them. The outmoded nature of many of our present political concepts in view of the portentous events resulting from the advances of industrial technology in the past century is evidently not nearly as obvious to the world's political leaders as it should be.

The six basic principles he formulates as the keystones to developing a sound foreign policy are also clearly and logically derived. It seems surprising that, in view of the clearness of the analysis of our present situation—the diagnosis of the fact that a large part of our troubles are due to the improper basis for our foreign policy—his article leaves the prescription for a cure unmentioned.

It seems to me that definite modification of the second present assumption, that "national sovereignty must be maintained," is the key to the future hope for peace and freedom in the world. Only when our political leaders realize that peace and freedom are the product of just law, and just law the product of representative government, can our government assume the leadership necessary to transform the United Nations from a league of sovereign states into a federal government with authority limited, but adequate, to assure peace by enactment and enforcement of world law to regulate international affairs.

Charles C. Price
Head, Department of Chemistry
Notre Dame, Indiana

Four Additional Points

Admirable in all other respects, Mr. Sears's analysis is incomplete, I think, in the following points:

1. Mere reform is no adequate basis for peace. "The price of peace is justice." Give a Hottentot a quart of milk and he will ask for the right to vote and for an unprejudiced judge and jury. Dollars alone, no matter how philanthropically invested, will not buy peace.

2. The frustrated desires of the people of the world for material goods cannot be satisfied until the economic rat-hole of war has been plugged. George Orwell's *1984* has dramatized the device of war as a drain for the inevitable by-product of the industrial system, excess production.

3. "Collective security" is a lie, because we have reached that stage in history when primitive efforts to keep peace in the world by ganging-up on each other have been for centuries archaic. But "military security" is a vicious lie because its propagators know all too well that the physicists, mathematicians and biochemists, their paid henchmen, have given them means to make this planet just a country churchyard in the solar system. "Military security"—please don't deny it—means the security of the mass grave.

4. "Dependable allies" is a contradiction in terms of the present world anarchy. The present government of the world is in the hands of men who are responsible to nobody, not even to their own constituents, let alone to other governments. Even in the most democratic nations, democracy ends at the doors of their Pentagons, their foreign ministries. "Free peoples" today are free only to pace within their gloomy national cells. Until citizens of the world are let loose into their world and given their citizenship rights in a democratic world government,

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there will be no dependability, and no government will be responsible to anyone.

John H. Davenport
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

An Expression of Appreciation

This is an expression of appreciation of Laurence Sears's "Walking Backward into the Future." To me it is one of the finest articles published by THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR since I have been a subscriber. I am glad you gave the article unabridged. And do give us more of such high quality and important material. To what better use can the FORUM be put?

Bertha May Clark
Newtown, Bucks County
Pennsylvania

The Autumn Issue

The Autumn issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR is the best number I have seen—both in the range and treatment of subjects and in their varied presentation.

While it is difficult to choose from the many valuable contributions, the editorial and "Time-frightened Playwrights" and "Conscience in the Parlor" seem the most challenging. But the highlight is "American Foreign Policy and Its Consequences," for that really makes one think intelligently.

Congratulations on the issue.

Frances Kellor
First Vice President,
American Arbitration Association
9 Rockefeller Plaza
New York 20, N. Y.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

Communism and Academic Freedom

Among the clean-cut statements in Professor T. V. Smith's contribution to the Summer FORUM are two which might be put together to justify an inference somewhat at variance with Professor Smith's recommendations: "Democrats must make up their minds to live dangerously as long as they are confronted by Communists." "The un-American activities committee of the state legislature . . . was quite within its rights" in instigating the investigation at the University of Washington.

The general if not universal pattern of un-American activities committees is, in personnel and procedure, one of seeking notoriety in line with the current mass hysteria—of accusation, rather than dispassionate inquiry. Such committees are satisfied when they can, by whatever procedures they follow, expose those whom their criteria stigmatize as Communists; they appear to be dissatisfied when forced to a negative finding, as in the recent Illinois investigation of Roosevelt College and the University of Chicago. (They seem not to be interested in Communist activity, but only in personalities which make dramatic headline material. And they are interested in neither activity nor personalities of the fascist line.)

The university administration and faculty faced by an investigation instigated by such a committee is certainly in theory free to choose whether to attempt to satisfy the committee or to consider the possibility of dissatisfying the committee. I take it that Professor Smith recommends the former

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alternative. That, I suggest, is not to live dangerously. It is the safe way, the comfortable way; it may well be the cowardly way. For members of the university community, who are supposed to be as free as men can be from the coercion of mass hysteria, to give in without a struggle to that hysteria when it is channeled through an agency of the legislature which has the right to investigate is to cultivate the sycophantic attitude and to weaken the moral fiber. The principal question is, as Professor Smith says, one of true expediency rather than of justice. But acquiescence in injustice in this situation is surely inexpedient, just because it is to shy away from living dangerously. The acquiescing academics hurt themselves more than they hurt the Communist victims.

I do not suggest that university administrations and faculties should resist investigation, or that they should adopt the role of attorney for the defense. I suggest that they should do everything in their power to make the committees, and legislators in general, understand where long-run democratic expediency lies. That might be to live dangerously.

Lee S. Hultzén
University of Illinois
Urbana, Illinois

In Memoriam—the College President

I have read with some interest the leading editorial in your Summer number of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. What puzzles me is why set up superlative, positive qualifications for a university president and represent him as a superman? Why not say that he must be just a plain, decent, honest man, that he shall be a man who demonstrably is not a "climber" and has shown no evidence of collusion with the present powers to gain the presidency? Why not require that he shall just have a fair amount of common sense and caution? Why not require him to be a modest man who gives some credit to the professors for their ability to solve administrative problems mostly of their own concern? Why not require that he must not be a political liar and a cad? Why not require the candidate to be satisfactory to the great majority of faculty as well as the Board before he is appointed? Why exaggerate the importance of the president's office and thereby tacitly minimize the responsibility of the professor?

Enclosed you will find a sample of administration at the University of Texas. Scholarship has fallen to about the same level as administrative conduct. Does anyone think that scholarship and professional morale in a university is not affected by the type of conduct of its administration?

E. J. Lund
The University of Texas
Institute of Marine Science
Port Aransas, Texas

ATTEMPTING to be the voice of Ralph Waldo Emerson, in an age the like of which the philosopher of Concord never dreamed, is an adventure into the unknown not to be circumscribed by a too-meticulous set of road signs.

However, if his name is to be invoked, it ought at least to be in character—which "R. W. Emerson, *secundus*" certainly is not in "In Memoriam—the College President."

Whatever the altitude of Emerson's cogitations above the level where men who have to carry on in a world not of their making have also to do their thinking, certainly they were constructive and hopeful, even in his critical moments. He never was guilty of the futility of rejecting the world as he found it, because it did not conform to his preferred pattern.

Constructive thinking starts where things are—including universities and colleges. Never is it painfully suggestive of the spoiled child who petulantly throws his spoon on the floor and howls, while he refuses to eat his porridge from a new bowl instead of the familiar old one. The figure is apt, as descriptive of "In Memoriam—the College President."

Making allowance for changed times,

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customs and manners, whenever in the history of American education was the administration of educational institutions free from the—to some—painful necessity of finding the funds for providing buildings, equipment and an adequate teaching and administrative force? And whenever was the college president relieved from primary responsibility for this mundane factor?

And is there occasion for despair in the fact that the modern prototype of the mourned onetime college executive head does a better job of keeping those engaged in the noble profession of education out of the penury that for a century and a half was characteristic of the American campus?

If it be true that higher education in America is in a state of flux, adjusting to a civilization also in a state of flux as we scramble madly to keep in touch with the progress of scientific knowledge, what would we?

Is it suggested it stand still, offering its message to a world that no longer exists?

The college president of today, instead of the anachronism held up as ideal by R. W. Emerson, *secundus*, is the only thing he can be and survive.

If utilitarianism has made survival a less than ideal process, the remedy is in constructive encouragement of a return to the refinements sacrificed in the scramble, not in forlorn baying the moon.

Archie E. McCrea
Editor, The *Muskegon Chronicle*
Muskegon, Michigan

"These Sudden Blights"

Is the ugly word "disinterest," used to mean "lack of interest," going to have to be accepted? After finding it twice, once in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR (p. 185 [Vol. 18]) and once in *Modern Language Notes* (p. 300), I fear the worst.

And the noble word "disinterested" is thus being lost, because so few writers (and virtually no journalists) will write the word "uninterested" any longer.

"What causes these sudden blights?" as William Dean Howells asked, when he began to see "different than" for "different from."

Yours for good American at least, if we can no longer expect good English.

Ruth Shepard Phelps Morand
38 rue des Mathurins
Paris, 8

A Modest Appraisal

In the 1949 Summer issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR is an article of tremendous humor by John J. Maloney, titled "A Modest Appraisal" (*re* a poem "Snap Your Toes" by Deirdre Denise Darleen Dunn).

One of the most guffaw-provoking, hilarious, laugh-inducing, droll, comical and witty bits of writing I've ever tearfully snorted my way through.

In appreciation,

Janice Ehrenberg
New Rochelle, New York

Congratulations to Mr. John J. Maloney on his article, "A Modest Appraisal," which appeared in the Summer issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. Seldom has the "potential dignity of the critic's function" raised such havoc with my neurological system. One cannot but condone the author's apprehension *re* the critique of Miss Dunn's poem. The almost morbid sensitivity he excavates from the work beclouds his perspicuity, and in the excavation process has succeeded in throwing more detritus in than he has removed.

One must acknowledge with gratitude, however, Mr. Maloney's allowance for individual interpretation of the line "round she goes and where she stops nobody knows." Can anyone not fail to see that this passage refers to a pair of purple bananas floating in a rainbarrel full of Anacin tablets? Come now, Mr. Baloney. Before pruning Eliot's tree, think of the disastrous consequences of pruning a quatrain!

Charles E. Carver, Jr.
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, Massachusetts

(*Continued on page 124*)

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UNDER WHATEVER SKY

Irwin Edman

Remote From Where?

Everyone, I suppose, knows the story of the Boston boy who, over lunch in Harvard Square, remarked to the Kansas boy that Kansas was far away. "Far from where?" was the sturdy Midwestern reply. I thought of the story last summer when I was living on a small ranch in Wyoming. We were forty miles from the nearest telegraph office, ten miles from the nearest telephone, two hundred miles from the nearest railroad to the East, the center of my universe. Mails seemed oddly slow. They came every day on an R.F.D. route but, because of difficult connections, even airmail from New York took anywhere from three to four days.

"Well, you have made yourself inaccessible," one friend wrote, though whether he was merely noting the fact or complaining about it, I could not determine. It was out of the world, I wrote to my friend, delightfully remote. But within a few days I found myself wondering—remote from where, remote from what? The papers arriving late did, it seemed, carry news that was remote from me. In vast metropolitan centers, one is no nearer great events than when one is in Wyoming. Actually, if, as some think, the decisive events of the future are being shaped in China, here I was two thousand miles nearer Shanghai than I would have been in New York. Remote from the world of society, fashion and power? Most of us are remote from those in New York. Removed from one's immediate obligations and responsibilities? In a way, yes—from friends, yes. But how much more clear and near some of these seemed, seen in the perspective of imagination in this lucid altitudinous light. And as for oneself, how much closer one seemed to get to it, without the distractions of the telephone and telegram and frequent mail. By the end of the summer, I decided that remote meant remote from these pines, from those cleanly lined mountain peaks, from this transparent air. Here, one was remote simply from the circumference of life, and a little nearer oneself. What was it Shelley said about poetry, the center and circumference of knowledge? Here in this silence, among the pines and aspen, one felt one was at the center chiefly.

As I Was Saying

The other night, in his car, a friend began a story. Something in the traffic interrupted him, and somehow, as I happened later to realize, he never took up the thread or began again. None of us, including the interrupted friend, seemed to have noticed that something had begun and not ended. "Not worth repeating now," he said when I reminded him.

Life, William James said, is a series of interruptions. It is a little depressing sometimes to think how much is left unfinished business, unachieved pleasure, stories of which we do not hear the end, friendships begun in summer leisure but never later picked up. As one thinks about it, one's life seems strewn with projects left hanging in mid-air, enterprises abandoned, affections diminished or lost by distance or by default. And in affairs not concerning oneself, time seems filled with unfinished stories. People bob into prominence and vanish, reputations sizzle into climax and sputter out. Once in Brazil I ran quite unexpectedly into a character who had been the center of a great literary scandal twenty-five years ago. By accident I saw what had happened to that story. Well, I doubt whether we want all stories ended. One of our fears is that the story itself will come to an end, and we do not bless the astronomers who assure us they know the end of the cosmic saga, in which all the myths and legends of civilization will come

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to an end forever, and there will be a vast frozen silence. But in that silence, perhaps, there will eventually be a stir of life, saying, as it were, "As I was saying." And if on a smaller time scale we worry, as many of us fairly continually do, that our civilization at last will end, even if the solar system will not yet, we may console ourselves that something in it will survive. Art, religion and philosophy will in time take up the story again. Another age will have forgotten even that there had been an interruption, and will hear the spirit of man murmur once more, "As I was saying. . ."

One Can't Have Everything

"One can't have everything," I replied to my friend who complained that he would like to live in the Virgin Islands, were it not that he couldn't see paintings and hear opera there. "Why not?" he asked. "I mean, why not morally? I have been told," and his voice grew a little irritable, "ever since I was a small child, that one can't have everything. One can't have one's cake and eat it too. One can't have the best of both worlds; one can't be both horse and rider; one can't have it both ways, one must cut one's cloth to one's purse, beggars can't be choosers. Mind you, I don't mind being reminded that this is unfortunately the kind of world in which we are living. But I have always resented the smug assumption that this is a reasonable state of affairs, and that on the whole it would be a worse world if one could have everything, if beggars could be choosers, if one could have the best of both worlds. There seems to be an hypocrisy, a fake humility, in pretending that one is bowing to reasonableness in accepting the limitations of human nature and the constrictive order of things as they are. What is so wonderful about the limitations of life that one should call it wisdom to idolize and idealize those limitations? The impossible is the only thing that's good enough for me."

"But that," I said, "is pure romanticism; that, if I may mix my metaphors, is like going into the garden and eating worms because one can't reach the moon."

"And what," my friend replied, "is wrong about romanticism? Rocket ships are, I am told, going to reach the moon, and voyages to the moon have long been imagined, as I recently learned in a book of that title. I intend to crave the impossible, to want everything—beggar though I am—to choose, to have or to want the best of youth and age. There's no harm wishing. And what's more, the world designed according to my wishes would be, I think I could prove, a great deal more rational than the vulgar one that has only the banal distinction of existing. What's wrong with having everything, and at once? The Earth isn't Heaven, but Heaven is still a better place than the Earth, and it's from Paradise that I derive my standards. Do you have a better source?"

Every Century Or So

Recently the papers published the obituary of the late Dean Hervey of the Columbia Law School, and mentioned as one of his recent activities a speech he gave to the South Carolina Society which, at its organization a hundred years ago, decided that they would listen to only one speech every century. That must have been an heretical decision to make in the most flourishing days of Southern oratory. The founder of that aristocratic coterie knew well enough how routine eloquence can become when listened to every month, or even every year. One pities the college chaplain or the college president who must annually make a commencement address. There is a challenge to say something non-fatuous, non-routine, to make of a stated occasion something striking and un-annual—a challenge infrequently met.

But to be told this is the first speech that has been made to this organization in one hundred years! There is a monition that must be paralyzing. It is almost as impossible to imagine as it would be impossible to live up to. The principle might be applied to writers. One ought to feel compelled always to say something world-shaking and stupendous, or to say nothing. To be put in the position of being the first voice to speak in a century! Out of the long silence one must come up with something worth saying.

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If a society waits a hundred years, one must give it something worth waiting for. One must do more than plagiarize what uncountable speakers have said for that hundred years. It is as if the whole world has been silent, waiting for the silence to break. What shall one say?

In the last hundred years much has happened. We are at a crossing of the ways. What will the next hundred years bring us? It must be a brave man who would break the silence that has endured so long. Perhaps the bravest of all would be he who would wait for another hundred years, when at least some of the current confusion will presumably be cleared up. If it is not, then there will really be a silence; there will be no humanity at all waiting for the releasing word, the clarion call, the speech of the century—for there will not be any to listen or to talk. But if the world should continue to exist, the new issues that will have arisen, will be no harder to resolve than those we have now. Certainly if one were asked, "Will you speak now or perhaps wait a century?" I think it might be well to wait a century for a better time to speak in, and undreamed of issues to speak to.

Da Capo

There are, as every day's headlines remind us, signs aplenty that we, the world, may be experiencing only another truce, longer or shorter, between a second and third World War. But there are signs too, perhaps subtly misleading, that we are in a fairly placid state, or at any rate that we think we are. The English Channel swimmers, I note, were busy again last summer. Only in a world where there was extra energy to spend would so many young people and some older ones be encouraged to indulge in such a wanton burst of energy. In an age where four-engined planes have become almost routine, fliers risk their lives, and some have already lost them, essaying to cross the Atlantic in a single-engined plane. Somebody has crossed the United States on a bicycle. New and complicated card games have become epidemic. College boys again are engaged in eating contests, which would have been unthought of under rationing conditions. Pastel shades have returned to men's shirts. The blandishments of courtesy and flattery have returned to salesmen in the shops and even in the auto salons. And, in a grim way, the most encouraging thing of all, perhaps—a disaster to an excursion steamer (a mere handful of lives lost, by wartime standards) has shocked the imagination of the world almost more than the unimaginably larger casualties of a big battle. We have time now to be silly, to be extravagant, to be shocked, to be lavish with energy and emotion—as in the stringency of war, or imminent war, we have not.

All this, of course, would be encouraging, except that, to those of a certain age, there is a strange feeling of *da capo* about all this. Was it not in the twenties that there were competitions for how long one could sit atop a flagpole? And was it not just before the depression that dance marathons were the vogue, and mah jong and miniature golf? And are there not signs of just these things and their equivalents coming back? Was it not in the twenties that there were weekly flights by solo fliers, or duos or trios, across the Atlantic and Pacific. Meanwhile, the tides of international tensions and economic crisis continue, now, as they did then. The vogue of the unimportant, the concern over the isolated disaster, are really not guarantees that the world is in order again. The normality has a familiar and suspicious ring.

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The Revolving Bookstand

The Contemporary Feminine

John J. Maloney

Two Worlds and Their Ways, by Ivy Compton-Burnett. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1949. $3.50
The Golden Apples, by Eudora Welty. New York: Harcourt, Brace. 1949. $3.00
The Heat of the Day, by Elizabeth Bowen. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1949. $3.00
The Christmas Tree, by Isabel Bolton. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1949. $2.75

IN AN article last spring in the *Nation*, Diana Trilling said that the point of view which unhappily unifies the work of our most talented and conscientious women authors is the fact that external reality seems to exist for them only as a means of reflecting their own highly developed powers of awareness.

I believe that this is at least partially true, but it must be qualified by the weighing of the advantages of the highly sensitive, private approach against its disadvantages. Certainly one does get, in reading the work of such distinguished writers as Eudora Welty, Elizabeth Bowen and Katherine Anne Porter, the uneasy and somewhat loutish feeling of having rudely brushed against a sensibility too refined for any direct contact with the ordinary world. Too often these authors seem tempted to endow their characters with the same exquisitely sharpened powers of perception that they themselves possess, so that what results is very like telepathy: each droop of an eyelid or unfinished gesture of a hand becomes weighted with worlds of meaning, which, unfortunately, are frequently not clear to the reader—not clear, in fact, to anyone except an equally sensitive character in the same novel.

This sort of writing, when practiced by such really fine artists as those I have mentioned, can produce a wonderfully delicate, multi-tinted pastel; when it is attempted by less talented imitators, however, it tends to become excruciatingly precious, reminding one of the painstaking efforts of those frustrated people who inscribe, in beautiful calligraphy, the Lord's Prayer on the head of a pin.

But there is an obverse side to the question. What this allegedly feminine approach, in its emphasis on the private and personal, lacks in scope and narrative power, it makes up for in other ways—as, for example, in style. It seems to me that our best women writers are more gifted stylists than their male counterparts. The prose is cleaner, more careful, and displays a lapidary precision of imagery which the contemporary male writer seldom achieves. Furthermore (while fully aware of the dangers inherent in this sort of generalization), I would say that in her ability to probe delicately into the more subtle realms of the human consciousness, the contemporary woman novelist far surpasses the man. The male embraces a large share of life in a great clumsy bear-hug; the female examines, with a jeweler's eye, the crystalline sliver of it that she holds in her hand.

In the light of this, it is interesting to discover that of four outstanding women writers whose new works were published this year, two have attempted to enlarge the scope of their previous work, while two have been content to remain within their own familiar milieu. Yet each has written an excellent, if not faultless, book.

JOHN J. MALONEY is a member of the faculty of the New School for Social Research. He contributes reviews regularly to the New York *Herald Tribune Book Review*, and an article of his appeared in the Summer, 1949, number of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

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In *The Heat of the Day* and *The Christmas Tree,* it is apparent that Miss Bowen and Miss Bolton are willing to sacrifice a portion of that gemlike luster so admired by their select coteries in order to explore wider vistas of human experience. In *The Golden Apples* Miss Welty has once again presented us with a strange and beautiful song of the South, which, for all, its dreamlike quality, bursts with the germinant warmth and genuine richness of folk-legend. As for Miss Compton-Burnett (*Two Worlds and Their Ways*), she remains her unique and inimitable self, the creator of a world as preposterously artificial as, say, that of *The Marriage of Figaro*, yet a world so brimming with wit and wisdom that we accept it, as we do Mozart's gratefully and without reservation.

Ivy Compton-Burnett and Eudora Welty are alike in this respect: each has created a complete world, but whereas Miss Welty's is the world of Prospero, shimmering with myth and magic and such stuff as dreams are made on, and somehow miraculously realized in Morgana, Mississippi, Miss Compton-Burnett's is a limited, provincial world, but, like Jane Austen's, made universal through the medium of incomparable dialogue.

These two private creations are as unlike as it is possible to imagine, yet they share the characteristic of being considerably removed from common reality, so that they may transcend that reality. Each author is quite willing to sacrifice traditional realism in order to get at the underlying truth of things in her peculiar way.

Miss Welty's microcosm is the Southern town. It is "The South," if you like, but it is the South as it could only exist in what is probably the most original and completely unhampered imagination at work in fiction today. Here everything is protean. It is all shift and change, sudden and lovely as the interplay of sunlight and shadow. Fact merges with myth and fades into dream. It is possible to hear "the dragon's crusty slither" in Miss Welty's South, or to see a satyr in a panama hat flitting from tree to tree.

Miss Compton-Burnett's world is nominally that of the English country-house and boarding school of the 1890's, but on the narrow realistic level we no more believe in it than we do in Miss Welty's, or in the world behind Alice's looking-glass. We accept it on a deeper level of truth; and, like Looking Glass House, once accepted, it is as logical as a geometric progression.

In *Two Worlds and Their Ways* we are once again confronted with a group of Miss Compton-Burnett's fantasically articulate characters. It would seem that the author, fully aware of her amazing powers, has chosen to disregard the now conventional devices of stream-of-consciousness or interior monologue. Instead of trying to get inside the minds of her characters, she has them speak their innermost thoughts directly to each other. To one who is encountering the formidable Miss Compton-Burnett for the first time, this can be extremely disconcerting. Children and servants, relatives and governesses, master and mistress, strip themselves and each other bare in endless conversation. And what conversation it is! It has become trite by now to say that I. Compton-Burnett writes the most scintillating dialogue in the language, but how is one to speak of her without mentioning this fact? The talk leaps, chamois-like, from epigram to dizzying epigram, much wiser than Wilde and more often witty. I should think we would have to go back to Restoration comedy for anything even approaching it.

The amazing part of it all, however, is that, despite the dazzle of these verbal pyrotechnics and the creaking machinery of an outlandish plot, Miss Compton-Burnett is able to reveal so many facets of the problem of good and evil; and although her characters are at all times the mouthpieces for her own brilliant observations, she is able to delineate each one clearly and at the same time make of them universal prototypes. The children say what all children feel, and they say it with that peculiarly abrupt and sadistic honesty which sometimes characterizes children; the servants speak for all servants, but they do so in phrases so polished and precise as to

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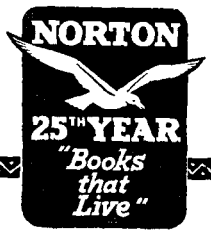

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From these ordinary stuffs of "our town," Miss Welty has woven a rich and intricate fabric. In prose of almost unbelievable beauty, she creates her own folk-myth, and, as in most myths, it is nature, more than any single character, which is the protagonist—whether nature in the human guise of King MacLain, the fabulous begetter, the eternal replenisher, the roving woodland deity, or nature, profligate and undisguised, bursting triumphant from the Southern earth. Such a book could not have had its roots in the rocky frost-bitten soil of the North; it was conceived where the snake slips silently into the river and fat sunspawned bugs feed on burrowed fruit, and the sound of violent growing fills the night.

Elizabeth Bowen and Isabel Bolton are artists who have reached full maturity, a rare achievement in the present age. They are mature in their understanding of human emotions and human relationships, and they are mature in the practice of their art. In their control over their material, their

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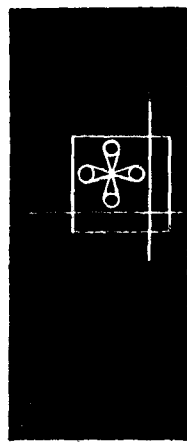

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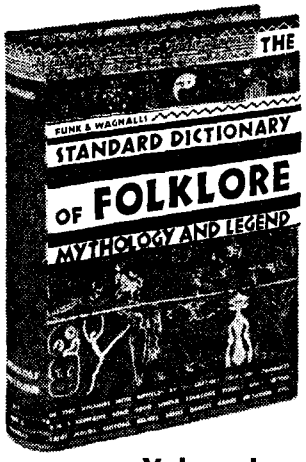
cause of an acridity on the tongue and nostrils; and as the singed dust settled and smoke diluted you felt more and more called upon to observe the daytime as a pure and curious holiday from fear. . . . The wall between the living and the living became less solid as the wall between the living and the dead thinned. . . . Strangers saying "Goodnight, good luck" to each other at street corners, as the sky first blanched then faded with evening, each hoped not to die that night, still more not to die unknown. . . . The very temper of pleasures lay in their chanciness, in the canvas-like impermanence of their settings, in their being offtime—to and fro between bars and grills, clubs and each other's places moved the little shoal through the noisy nights. Faces came and went. There was a diffused gallantry in the atmosphere, an unmarriedness. . . .

It is in this atmosphere that Stella Rodney meets and falls in love with Robert Kelway, and, Miss Bowen seems to say, this love, born of ruin and nurtured on chaos, cannot survive. Neither lover knows, or wishes to know, about the other's past; each is afraid of discovering the flaw in the pattern of the other's life. It is a hermetic love, seeking to find every answer in itself.

Miss Bowen has woven this story of disruption and love into a complex plot, which, surprisingly enough, involves some spy and counter-spy activities. This, it seems to me, is not one of Miss Bowen's happier choices. She titillates the reader with hints of mysterious happenings in the past which seem to foreshadow some future climax, but these eventually fade away or disappear into delicate nuance. It is as if Miss Bowen had ventured a step or two onto Graham Greene's preserve and then, horrified at the realization that she was trespassing, had withdrawn hastily to her own private estate.

In *The Christmas Tree* Isabel Bolton is dealing specifically with the problem of homosexuality. To put it briefly, Hilly Danforth, unloved in childhood and married to a stolid loveless man, lavishes her pent-up affection on her son, Larry, who becomes homosexual. But there is much more to it than this. The entire first section of the book is devoted to Hilly as she waits, with her grandson, aged six, for Larry and his divorced wife to arrive for Christmas. Here, in a series of highly selective Proust-



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ian voyages into *le temps perdu*, admirable in their expertness, Miss Bolton shows us the disintegration of the whole Victorian patriarchal society in which Hilly grew up, and explains Hilly's mistakes in terms of that society. Thus Miss Bolton on Hilly's loveless childhood:

If she had had a little understanding from her parents this would have been of great assistance to her emotionally, but though they were always telling her that she was "all they had" and assuring her that they lived only for her, she had, she suspected, realized all along that their parental love was meted out on the oddest possible terms and that the only conspicuous evidence of their affection for her lay in this habitual declaration that she was all they had on earth; though she received, of course, those kisses bestowed upon her in the ordered routine of greetings at night and morning—"good morning, Hilly"; "good night, my dear."

Or on Hilly's loveless marriage:

Few marriages could have been less romantic. She'd not been in love with William and certainly he'd not even pretended to be in love with her. And yet, the direct, the simple manner in which he'd taken what he so courteously referred to as "the pleasures of the marriage bed" was, whenever she thought of him, the thing about him that she'd liked the best—so honest and primitive. And she had allowed him those privileges, without passion to be sure, but with a certain luxury of relaxed nerves, a sense of faithfully fulfilling her contract with nature, that being woman had not been without sentiment and sanctity; indeed there had been many moments with William fast asleep and snoring beside her when she had lain there praying he might awake and turn to her with words of tenderness and that she might, returning his embraces, learn from him a little something of the mystery and poetry of love.

Through the reminiscences of Hilly Danforth, and through the fusion, on almost every page of this first section, of past with present, we get an almost unbearable sense of the unbridgeable gulf between the world of Hilly's childhood and the new world of her grandson.

The Christmas tree becomes a symbol of this gulf. Mrs. Danforth, insisting this year on the ritual of the Christmas tree, remembers nostalgically the awe with which she viewed "the great green fabulous" Christmas trees of her childhood. Her grandson,

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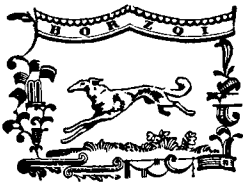

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however, is merely bored with the idea. He is much more interested in a model airplane. "It's the big one, you know, grandma, the one that dropped the bomb on Hiroshima."

In the second section of the book occurs the action for which Hilly's remembrances have set the stage. Here Miss Bolton is less successful. Her characters are well conceived, and she treats them with keen understanding and warm compassion; and yet, largely because the first part of the book was so restrained and so perfect, this section seems loosely knit, and in the end approaches perilously close to melodrama.

I mentioned earlier that, in my opinion, both Elizabeth Bowen and Isabel Bolton, in their latest novels, had attempted to break away from some of the limitations associated with the feminine approach. In Miss Bowen's case the step is most noticeable. In *The Heat of the Day* she has not hesitated to abandon the perfect miniature work of *The Death of the Heart*, in order to paint upon a larger and more diffuse canvas. As for Miss Bolton, while she too has taken a step, it is a cautious step, and perhaps a wiser one. For she has attempted not so much the enlarging of the canvas as the recoloring of it, substituting rich hues for pale ones. Both writers are to be commended for their efforts to infuse their work with a warmth and vitality unlike that of so many other authors of the day, who seem to forget that a small, meticulous, highly-polished work can resemble a gem in coldness as well as brilliance.

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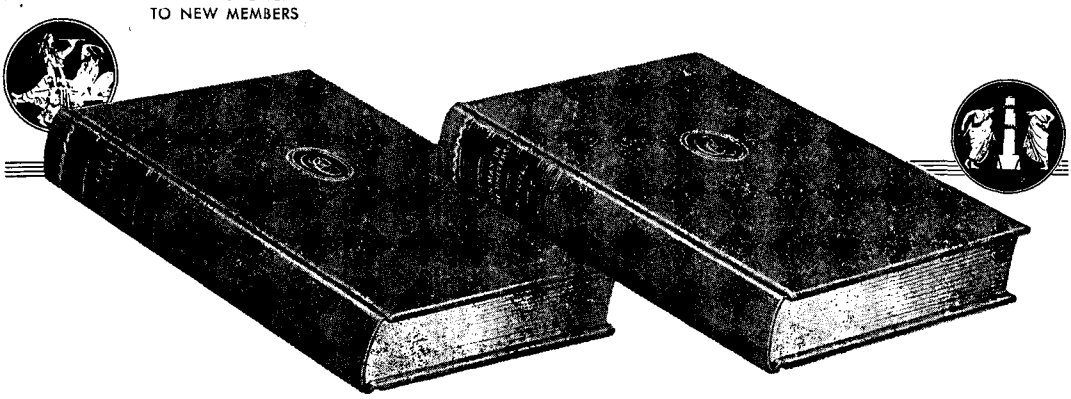

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THE READER REPLIES

(*Continued from page 106*)

Are We Hysterical?

The editorial, "Are We Hysterical?" describes a dilemma that people have been experiencing for at least two years now. But do you know the answer we found? Religion!

Reinhold Niebuhr was not the first to discover that for being a social revolutionary one's safest vantage point was religious. With Niebuhr it is Christian orthodoxy so full of dogma and doctrine he's practically Catholic. But it isn't necessary to be that conservative religiously to get the benefit of the Christian fortress. We who are Quakers, and as a group subscribing to no doctrine or dogma, are in an even better position, or so we find. Not long ago President Hutchins of the University of Chicago told an Institute for Peace sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee that if any member of the Faculty talked like a Quaker for peace he'd probably be fired, and if he were an ordinary citizen he'd be jailed. But the Quakers he said had an "odor of sanctity" so he welcomed them at the U. of C.—also because they were rich—had won about $40,000 in Nobel prize money. So maybe the Quakers should be looked into by R. W. Emerson *secundus*.

I notice you're going to have a FORUM on the American woman in this issue. It had better be good—status of women has been my pet study for years and I could give both pro and con. But if either is unfair about it, I'll object.

You'll be getting my renewal to THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR soon, but I can't get around to it just now. Thanks for a lively issue. I've enjoyed it thoroughly.

Rose Gordon LeVan
4901 Drummond Street
East Chicago, Indiana

(*Continued on page 126*)

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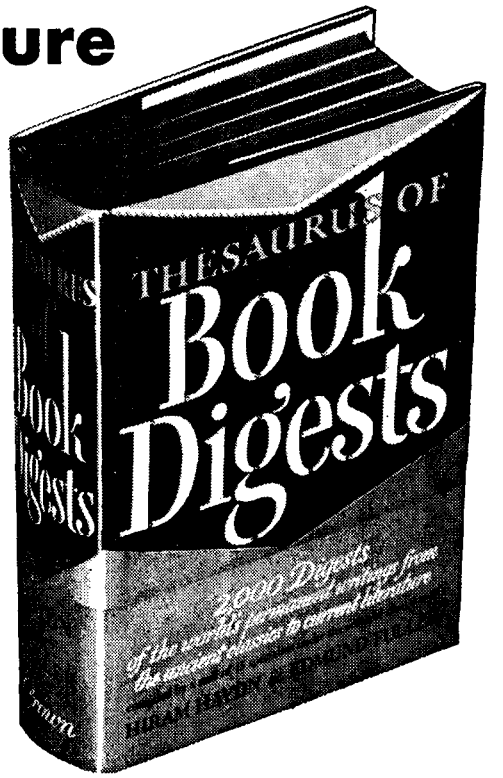

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THE READER REPLIES

(*Continued from page 124*)

The Knife

After reading "Time-frightened Playwrights," the words of the defense in Dostoievsky's *Brothers Karamazoff* seem more timely than ever: "profound as psychology is, it's a knife that cuts both ways." It seems that George Kernodle has carefully sharpened only one side of the knife, and as a consequence has whetted my appetite for the other.

Streetcar Named Desire is depicted as representing the "death rattle of civilization." Yet the "defense" might just as easily point out that it is the sister who represents civilization, and Blanche is merely symbolic of those in every period who are unable to make the transition from past to present. Using this side of the knife: civilization, as always, continues to outlive change despite those who fall by the wayside. (It is also entirely conceivable that Blanche DuBois represents no one but a pathetic yet sympathetic character called Blanche DuBois!)

In treating *Death of a Salesman,* it is true that "both the salesman and the age are to blame." But why make the "salesman" symbolic of *all* men afraid to face the truth about themselves, and in the same breath use the machine "age" as symbolic of nothing but itself? Cannot the illusions and empty facade of the "age" stand for the false values in all ages, just as the salesman stands as a symbol for all men? Looking at it from this edge of the knife, "time" becomes a non-entity in the play, for the urgency of man being able to see more than just the illusions and surface values of his life will always apply in any age. . . . Taking a final swipe with this side of the knife: the only person who seems "time-frightened" is perhaps Mr. Kernodle.

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